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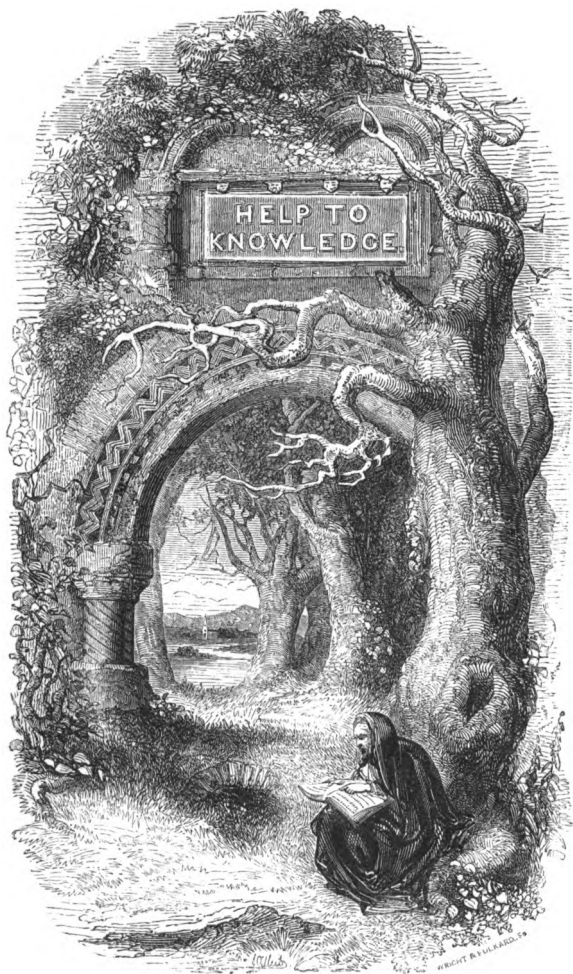


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A
HELP TO KNOWLEDGE,
CHIEFLY RELIGIOUS,
IN
Extracts from the most approved Writers
ARRANGED SYSTEMATICALLY.

BY
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ADVERTISEMENT.

A REFERENCE to the names of Authors whose works have been made use of, will furnish, it is conceived, the best guarantee for the principles of this compilation. The Editor has usually remarked two (to his mind) decided drawbacks to the utility of works of this nature ; the one arising from the brevity and consequent incompleteness of the passages quoted ; the other from the hastiness of transition from one subject to another that has no connexion with it. These two faults he has endeavoured to avoid ; and he trusts that the reader will find in the following pages a sum of practical Christian wisdom, borrowed, indeed, from lights that have shone in several ages, but so arranged as to present a well-digested and continuous treatise. In two or three instances, where he could not lay his hand upon a passage that fell in exactly with his arrangement, he has ventured to supply the deficiency from his own resources.

T. C.

ARRANGEMENT OF CONTENTS.

PART I.

Religious.

	PAGE
1. The Christian Faith	9-18
2. The Church	18-30
3. The Scriptures	30-35
4. Prayer	35-48
5. The Progress and Perfection of the Christian Character	48-65
6. Unity	66-69
7. Means of Grace	69-76
8. Conclusion	76-78

PART II.

Miscellaneous.

1. The Laws of Society	79-83
2. Constitution of England, and Character of the People	84-100

INDEX TO AUTHORS QUOTED.

- Abercrombie, 53.
Addison, 98.
Bacon, 21, 89, 92.
Barrow, 13, 22.
Baxter, 50.
Beveridge (Bp.), 25.
Blackstone, 30, 83, 84, 93.
Browne (Sir Thomas), 21.
Bull (Bp.), 67.
Burke, 80, 86, 88, 89, 95.
Burnet (Bp.), 77, 93, 98.
Clarendon, 83.
Coleridge, S. T. 10, 22.
Comber, 35, 40.
Editor, 18, 19, 91, 96.
Fuller (Thomas), 46, 48, 65,
89, 92, 94.
Gladstone, 22, 28.
Hall (Bp.), 16, 21, 27, 47.
Hare, C. J. 88.
Hawkins, Dr. E. 33.
Herbert, G. 31, 38.
Hobart (Bp.), 22.
Hooker, 28, 36, 37, 38, 39,
67, 71, 75, 79, 87, 88.
Horsley (Bp.), 81, 87, 89.
Jones (Sir William), 33.
Knox (Alexander), 28.
Leighton, 46, 55, 69, 70, 71, 79.
Mant (Bp.), 18, 51.
Mason, (Francis), 45.
Miller, 23.
Milner, 68.
Newman, 57.
Patrick (Bp.), 55, 58, 61, 62.
Pearson (Bp.), 15.
Penrose, 22, 66.
Pusey, 90.
Sanderson (Bp.), 72, 99.
Sparrow (Bp.), 42, 43, 44.
Taylor (Bp.), 9, 12, 37, 54,
60, 63, 64, 66, 73, 74.
Townson, 51.
Waterland, 16.
Whewell, 11.
Young, 14.



TO
KNOWLEDGE.

CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

THE Christian religion, in all its moral parts, is nothing else but the law of nature and true reason complying with the great necessities of all the world, and promoting the great profit of all relations, and carrying us through all accidents and variety of chances to that end which God hath from eternal ages proposed for all that live according to it, and which he hath revealed in Jesus Christ; and, according to the apostle's arithmetic, hath put these three parts of it—1. sobriety; 2. justice; 3. religion: "For the grace of God bringing salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live (1) soberly, (2) righteously, and (3) godly, in this present world, looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." The first contains all our deportment in our personal and private capacities, the fair treating of our bodies and our spirits; the second enlarges our duty in all relations to our neighbour; the third contains the offices of direct religion and intercourse with God.

BISHOP TAYLOR.

B

WHAT THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION IS.

Morality is the body, of which the faith in Christ is the soul; so far indeed an earthly body as it is adapted to our state of warfare on earth, and the appointed form and instrument of holding communion with the present world; yet not "earthly," nor of the world, but a celestial body, and capable of being transfigured "from glory to glory," in accordance with the varying circumstances and outward relations of its moving and informing spirit.

COLERIDGE.

The being and providence of one living God, holy, gracious, merciful, the creator and preserver of all things, and a father of the righteous; the moral law in its utmost height, breadth, and purity; a state of retribution after death; the resurrection of the dead; and a day of judgment;—all these were known and received by the Jewish people, as established articles of national faith, at or before the proclaiming of Christ by the Baptist. They are the groundwork of Christianity, and essentials in the Christian faith, but not its characteristic and peculiar doctrines; except indeed as they are confirmed, enlivened, realised, and brought home to the whole being of man, head, heart, and spirit, by the truths and influences of the Gospel.

Peculiar to Christianity are :—I. The belief that a means of salvation has been effected and provided for the human race by the incarnation of the Son of God in the person of Jesus Christ; and that his life on earth, his sufferings, death, and resurrection, are not only proofs and manifestations, but likewise essential and effective parts of the great redemptive act, whereby also the obstacle from the corruption of our nature is rendered no longer insurmountable.

II. The belief in the possible appropriation of this benefit by repentance and faith, including the aids that render an effective faith and repentance themselves possible. III. The belief in the reception (by as many as "shall be heirs of salvation") of a living and spiritual principle, a seed of life capable of surviving this natural life, and of existing in a divine and immortal state. IV. The belief in the awakening of the spirit in them that truly believe, and in the communion of the spirit thus awakened with the Holy Spirit. V. The belief in the accompanying and consequent gifts, graces, comforts, and privileges of the Spirit, which, acting primarily on the heart and will, cannot but manifest themselves in suitable works of love and obedience, *i.e.* in right acts, with right affections, and from right principles. VI. Further, as Christians, we are taught that these works are the appointed signs and evidences of our faith; and that, under limitation of the power, the means, and opportunities afforded us individually, they are the rule and measure by which we are bound and enabled to judge of what spirit we are. VII. All these, together with the doctrine of the fathers (of the Old Testament), re-proclaimed in the everlasting Gospel, we receive in the full assurance that God beholds and will finally judge us with a merciful consideration of our infirmities, a gracious acceptance of our sincere though imperfect strivings, a forgiveness of our defects through the mediation, and a completion of our deficiencies by the perfect righteousness of the man Christ Jesus, even the Word that was in the beginning with God, and who, being God, became man for the redemption of mankind.

COLERIDGE.

Thus the moral law is our schoolmaster to bring us to God our judge, to Christ our redeemer, and

to the Holy Spirit our constant guide and support. That perfect obedience which the law demands, but demands in vain, leads us to lean upon the satisfaction of the cross; and that subordination of all the lusts of the flesh and of the soul to the awakened and enlightened conscience, which is the only consistent interpretation of the law, makes it needful for us to ask from the Father the aid of that Spirit whose fruits are "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance."

WHEWELL.

IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION.

It is necessary that every man should consider, that since God hath given him an excellent nature, wisdom, and choice, and an understanding soul, and an immortal spirit,—having made him lord over the beasts, and but a little lower than the angels; he hath also appointed for him a work and a service great enough to employ those abilities, and hath also designed him to a state of life after this, to which he can only arrive by that service and obedience. And therefore, as every man is wholly God's portion by the title of creation, so all our labours and care must be wholly employed in the service of God, even all the days of our life, that this life being ended, we may live with him for ever. Neither is it sufficient that we think of the service of God as a work of the least necessity, or of small employment, but that it be done by us as God intended it; that it be done with great earnestness and passion, with much zeal and desire; that we refuse no labour; that we bestow upon it much time; that we use the best guides, and arrive at the end of glory by all the ways of grace, of prudence, and religion. And indeed, if we consider how much of our lives is taken up by the needs

of nature ; how many years are wholly spent before we come to any use of reason ; how many years more before that reason is useful to us to any great purposes ; how imperfect our discourse is made by our evil education, false principles, ill company, bad examples, and want of experience ; how many parts of our wisest and best years are spent in eating and sleeping, in necessary business and unnecessary vanities, in worldly civilities and less useful circumstances, in the learning arts and sciences, languages or trades ;—that little portion of hours that is left for the practices of piety and religious walking with God is so short and trifling, that, were not the goodness of God infinitely great, it might seem unreasonable or impossible for us to expect of him eternal joys in heaven, even after the well spending those few minutes which are left for God and God's service, after we have served ourselves and our own occasions. And yet it is to be considered, that the fruit which comes from the many days of recreation and vanity is very little ; and although we scatter much, yet we gather up but little profit ;—but from the few hours we spend in prayer and the exercises of a pious life, the return is great and profitable ; and what we sow in the minutes and spare portions of a few years, grows up to crowns and sceptres in a happy and glorious eternity. BISHOP TAYLOR.

EXCELLENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

The knowledge of religious truth is plainly the top of all knowledge whereof we are capable ; not consisting in barren notions, not gratifying idle curiosity, not serving trivial purposes, but really bettering our souls, producing most goodly and wholesome fruits, tending to ends most noble and worthy : this

indeed is the highest philosophy, the true culture and medicine of our soul, the true guide of life and mistress of action, the mother of all virtues, the best invention of God, and rarest gift of Heaven to men. Hence the Christian rustic or mechanic can tell us what a learned infidel doth not know ; a child can assure us that wherein a deep philosopher is lost. For, ask a peasant, ask a boy educated in our religion, who made him ? he will tell you, God Almighty ; which is more than Aristotle or Democritus would have told. Demand of him, *why* he was made ? he will answer you, to serve and glorify his Maker ; and hardly would Pythagoras or Plato have replied so wisely. Examine him concerning his soul, he will aver that it is immortal, that it shall undergo a judgment after this life, that accordingly it shall abide in a state of bliss or misery everlasting ; about which points neither Socrates nor Seneca could assure us any thing. Inquire of him, how things are upheld, how governed and ordered ? he presently will reply, by the powerful hand and wise providence of God ; whereas among philosophers, one would ascribe all events to the current of fate, another to the tides of fortune ; one to blind influences of stars, another to a confused jumble of atoms. Pose him about the main points of morality and duty, and he will in a few words better inform you than Cicero, or Epictetus, or Aristotle, or Plutarch, in their large tracts and voluminous discourses about matters of that nature.

BARROW.

THE CHRISTIAN'S FAITH.

There are two considerations upon which my faith in Christ is built as upon a rock :—1. The fall of man, the redemption of man, and the resurrection of man—the three cardinal articles of our religion—

are such as human ingenuity could never have invented, therefore they must be divine. 2. The other argument is this,—If the prophecies have been fulfilled (of which there is abundant demonstration), the Scripture must be the word of God; and if the Scripture is the word of God, Christianity must be true.

YOUNG.

Although those things which I am ready to affirm be not apparent to my sense, so that I cannot say I see them; although they be not evident to my understanding of themselves, nor appear unto me true by the virtue of any natural and necessary cause, so that I cannot say I have any proper knowledge or science of them; yet seeing they are certainly contained in the Scriptures, the writings of the blessed apostles and prophets; seeing those apostles and prophets were endued with miraculous power from above, and immediately inspired with the Holy Ghost, and consequently what they delivered was not the word of man, but God himself; seeing that God is of that universal knowledge and infinite wisdom, that it is impossible he should be deceived, of that entire holiness and transcendent rectitude that it is not imaginable he should intend to deceive any man, and consequently whatsoever he hath delivered for a truth must be necessarily and infallibly true;—I readily and steadfastly assent unto them as most certain truths, and am as fully and absolutely, and more concernedly, persuaded of them, than of any thing I see or know. And because that God who hath revealed them hath done it, not for my benefit only, but for the advantage of others, nor for that alone, but also for the manifestation of his own glory; seeing for those ends he hath commanded me to profess them, and hath promised an eternal reward upon my profession of them; seeing

that every particular person is to expect the justification of himself, and the salvation of his soul, upon the condition of his own faith,—as with a certain and full persuasion I assent unto them, so with a fixed and undaunted resolution I will profess them; and with this faith in my heart, and confession in my mouth, in respect of the whole body of the creed, and every article and particle of it, I sincerely, readily, resolvedly say, “*I believe.*”

BISHOP PEARSON.

THE HOLY TRINITY.

The doctrine of the Trinity lies shortly in these particulars: 1. That the Father is God (in the strict sense of *necessary*, as opposed to *precarious* existence), and the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God, in the same sense of the word God. 2. That the Father is not the Son, nor the Son the Father, nor the Holy Ghost either Father or Son: they are distinct, so that one is not the other; that is, as we now term it, they are three distinct persons, and two of them eternally referred up to one. 3. These three, however distinct enough to be three persons, are yet united enough to be one God.

WATERLAND.

GOD THE SON.

Where shall I begin to wonder at thee, O thou divine and eternal Peace-maker, the Saviour of men, the Anointed of God, Mediator between God and man; in whom there is nothing which doth not exceed not only the conception but the very wonder of angels, who saw thee in thy humiliation with silence, and adore thee in thy glory with perpetual praises and rejoicings. Thou wast for ever of thy,

self as God, of the Father as Son ; the eternal Son of an eternal Father ; not later in being, not less in dignity, not other in substance ; begotten without diminution of Him that begot thee, while he communicated that wholly to thee which he retained wholly in himself, because both were infinite ; without inequality of nature, without division of essence : when being in this estate, thine infinite love and mercy caused thee, O Saviour, to empty thyself of thy glory, that thou mightest put on our shame and misery. Wherefore not ceasing to be God as thou wert, thou beganst to be what thou wert not—man ; to the end that thou mightest be a perfect Mediator between God and man, which wert both in one person—God, that thou mightest satisfy ; man, that thou mightest suffer ;—that since man had sinned and God was offended, thou which wert God and man might satisfy God for man. None but thyself, which art the eternal Word, can express the depth of this mystery, that God should be clothed with flesh, come down to men, and become man, that man might be exalted to the highest heavens, and that our nature might be taken into fellowship of the Deity ; that he to whom all powers in heaven bowed, and thought it their honour to be serviceable, should come down to be a servant to his slaves, a ransom for his enemies ; together with our nature taking up our very infirmities, our shame, our torments, and bearing our sins without sin ; that thou, whom the heavens were too strait to contain, shouldst lay thyself in an obscure cot ; thou, which wert attended of angels, shouldst be derided of men, rejected of thine own, persecuted by tyrants, tempted with devils, betrayed of thy servant, crucified among thieves, and, which was worse than all these in thine own apprehension, for a time forsaken of thy Father ; that thou, whom our sins had pierced, shouldst for our sins both sweat drops of

blood in the garden, and pour out streams of blood upon the cross.

BISHOP HALL.

THE HOLY GHOST.

“Whoso hath not the Spirit of Christ is none of his.” By him we are first regenerated at baptism; by him we are afterwards “confirmed” in the imposition of hands; by him we are “renewed in the spirit of our minds” when we fall into sin; by him we are taught throughout our lives the things necessary to our spiritual welfare, put in mind of the things we have forgotten, “stirred up” when we are dull, “helped” in our prayers, relieved in our “infirmities,” comforted in our heaviness; in a word, “sealed to the day of our redemption,” and “raised up again at the last day.” In a word, go along even from our baptism to our resurrection, and we cannot do without him, but receive him we must.

MANT.

THE CHURCH—ITS DEFINITION.

The Church is *the society of believers in any one place* (be it larger or smaller, as a house, a city, a diocese, a kingdom), *who, as individuals, profess to live according to, and, as a body, to be organised by the rules of Jesus Christ and his apostles.* It is a “society,” for individuals must not stand alone, but as “members one of another,” and under the government of duly ordained ministers. It is “the” society, not any society, for there can be but one such in any given place (Acts, ii. 47). It has two marks, an external and an internal one—outward order and inward holiness (Eph. iv. 1, with 3-16, and 17-32). But as we dare not assert what amount of deviation from either of these marks absolutely unchurches an

individual or a society, where no authoritative decision has taken place, we rest satisfied with a "profession." By a common figure of speech, the word "Church" is applied to denote sometimes the *building* in which any such society holds its public assemblies (as the word "court" means sometimes the building in which the judges meet, and sometimes the judges themselves); or, secondly, the *governors* by whom the affairs of the society are administered. So we speak of "England" making war and peace, or sending out ambassadors, &c., meaning thereby the government of England, for the time being.

EDITOR.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

One of the four privileges enumerated in the creed as consequent upon admission into "the Church" is, "the communion of saints," which is developed by St. Paul in the following manner: "We are come (1) unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and (2) to an innumerable company of angels, (3) to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, (4) and to God the Judge of all, (5) and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and (keeping the most important till *last*) to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb. xii. 22-24). By the *first* is meant the visible Church (Gal. iv. 26), which, as "witness of the truth and keeper of holy writ," informs us what books have ever been considered to be the production of the Holy Ghost, and what faith has ever been held among Christians. *Secondly*, the same apostle tells us in another place expressly that

the angels are "ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb. i. 14). By the *third* we understand the "communion of saints" proper (1 John, i. 7). By fellowship with any true branch of the Church, an interest is gained in the prayers of all other true branches, since all pray for "the good estate" of the whole; and the prayers of those who meet together in "Christ's name" (*i. e.* as he has appointed them), the Father will hear. *Fourthly*, with those who keep his commandments Christ has promised that he and *his Father* will come and make their abode; and the observance of unity is one of his commandments. Now this communion, it appears, can only be had through an apostolic Church; for so St. John writes, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that *ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*" (1 John, i. 3). *Fifthly*, that saints departed are "witnesses" (Heb. xii. 1) of, and take an interest in, our trials, appears from Scripture. Reason, moreover, tells us that "death, which is nothing but the separation of the soul from the body, can make no breach in mystical union or spiritual conjunction, but must rather improve it." In what that communion consists, is not so clearly revealed, save that it is "a society of hope, esteem, and imitation on our side, of desires and supplications on their side."* *Lastly*, through the Church the saints have communion with "Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and with the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel;" for "Christ loved *the Church*, and gave himself for *it*, that he might sanctify and cleanse *it* with the washing of water by the word, that he might present *it* to himself a glorious Church,

* Bishop Pearson.

not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that *it* should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. v. 25).

EDITOR.

THE CHURCH.

The contradiction of tongues does every where meet with us out of the tabernacle of God ; therefore, whithersoever thou shalt turn thyself, thou shalt find no end of controversies, except thou withdraw thyself into that tabernacle. Thou wilt say, It is true, and it is to be understood of the unity of the Church. But hear, and note: there was in the tabernacle the ark, and in the ark the testimonies or tables of the law. What dost thou tell me of the husk of the tabernacle without the kernel of the testimony? The tabernacle was ordained for the keeping and delivering over from hand to hand of the testimony. In like manner, the custody and passing over of the Scriptures is committed unto the Church ; but the life of the tabernacle is the testimony.

BACON.

Where the Scripture is silent, the Church is a text ; where that speaks, it is but a comment.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

The Scripture is the sun, the Church is the clock, whose hand points us to, and whose sound tells us, the hour of the day. The sun we know to be sure, and regularly constant in his motion ; the clock, as may fall out, may go too fast or too slow. We are wont to look at and listen to the clock, to know the time of day ; but where we find the variation sensible, to believe the sun against the clock, not the clock against the sun. As, then, we would condemn him of much folly, that should profess to trust the clock rather than the sun, so we

cannot but justly tax the miscredulity of those who will rather trust to the Church than to the Scriptures.

HALL.

The case of the world before the Mosaic law, and independently of it, shews the inability of man to retain pure truth in an abstract form; that is, without a Church, ministers, creeds, &c.

GLADSTONE.

My fixed principle is, that a Christianity without a Church exercising spiritual authority, is vanity and dissolution; and my belief is, that when popery is rushing in on us like an inundation, the nation will find it to be so.

COLERIDGE.

The Gospel in the Church was his motto: united in the beginning, man, he contended, had no right to put them asunder. When asked if the Church was to be spread every where; Yes, said he, could I send my voice into every part of Zion, her ministry, her order, her worship, in all her great distinctive principles, maintain her at all hazards.

LIFE OF BP. HOBART.

The way of religion is over an open country, with the ultimate object before us in general plainly discernible, but the ground to be traversed very uneven. Many pilgrims keep one track—some keep another; and there are some who pick out their own way for themselves. But they who keep in a body advance with more resolution of mind, and not only with less apprehension of missing the road, but with greater vigour also and alacrity of step.

PENROSE.

The simpler sort of men will in effect be always led, not by their own judgment, but by the autho-

riety of others; and if they be not fairly guided by those whom God hath constituted and assigned to that end, they will be led by the nose by those who are concerned to seduce them: so reason dictateth that it must be, so experience sheweth it ever to have been, that the people, whenever they have deserted their true guides, have soon been hurried by impostors into most dangerous errors and extravagant follies: being "carried about by divers and strange doctrines:" being "like children, tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine." It is therefore a great advantage to us, and a great mercy of God, that there are (by God's care) provided for us such helps, upon which we may commonly, for our guidance in the way to happiness, more safely rely than upon our own judgments, liable to mistake, and than upon the counsel of others, who may be interested to abuse us. And very foolish and very ungrateful we are, if we do not highly prize, if we do not willingly embrace, this advantage.

BARROW.

Suppose that of a company of men called to the possession of a temporal inheritance, any one becomes disquieted by an imagination that he cannot live therein in safety and security, except in a mansion of his own building, let him set to work and build. He has the property, and it is open to him to do so. His own right of inclination justifies the act, where nothing interferes to forbid it. But if there be fit houses in that heritage already, and more of his less enterprising brethren, finding these ready to their hand, and pleasant places to dwell in—"houses full of all good things, which they filled not"—shall be willing and desirous to take up their abode there, and enter into the labours of other men, shall he that buildeth for himself justly charge them with sloth, or cowardice, or lukewarm zeal? And if

these latter, entering into such prepared heritage, shall honestly furnish and make clean their dwellings—shall keep the fire alive and blazing upon the hearth to heat and enlighten it—shall dispense abroad the contributions of a generous hospitality, every man to the best of his ability;—if, again, receiving their portion thus, like the children of Reuben and Gad, they are yet willing to go forth to build or to war, if their Captain shall call for them,—what shall forbid but that these shall be pronounced to act neither an unwise, nor an unreasonable, nor an unsafe part? To pass, then, from an illustration to a plain statement of real life. If a devout reception of the Bible as the word of God, in the first instance for no other reason than because it was presented as such; if a hearty submission to that word and the will of God, and a fear of offending him; if a confession of, and reliance upon the name of Jesus Christ, and on the help of divine grace; if these, received implicitly at the beginning, and then pursued, because they are found to supply the spirit with satisfaction and consolation in its performance of daily duty; if these do not, in their lowest and weakest proportions, constitute an intelligible, and real, and saving form of Christian faith; then where and what is the belief of thousands and tens of thousands of our simpler brethren, inheritors, we trust, no less than ourselves, of the hope of salvation? or wherein are they better than the heathen, except that they live under a happier light of human knowledge and of civil government? It is a blessing to be able to inquire, and God give unto us, as many as enjoy the ability, grace to profit by it! But to insist upon inquiry (I mean inquiry more or less sceptical) indiscriminately, or in any manner which the Spirit of grace, manifested by its fruits, has not itself suggested to the believer's own heart,—this, be the por-

tion of ability vouchsafed what it may, is neither the way to discover truth nor to promote unity.

MILLER.

AN APOSTOLICAL MINISTRY.

As there is no nation upon earth but where they profess some kind of religion or other, so there is no religion professed in the world but where they have some persons or other set apart for the celebration of the several rites and ceremonies in it, without which, indeed, it is impossible that any religion should subsist; for if no places were set apart for the worship of God, men would soon worship him no where; if no times, they would never worship him; so, if no persons were set apart for conducting it, none would ever do it, at least not so as they ought. And if this be so in natural, how much more in revealed religion, of which this seems to be one of the integral or essential parts; without which, it is not that which God has revealed: for whensoever he, the great Creator and Governor of the world, hath revealed his will and pleasure to his creatures, how he would have them worship and serve him that made them, he hath at the same time constituted certain officers among them to assist them in it; which officers being, as it were, his own domestics, or immediate servants or ministers, waiting continually upon himself and his service, he always hath reserved to himself the constitution or ordination of them; not suffering any one that had a mind to it to meddle with any thing belonging to the said offices, without his leave and order first obtained. Hence the apostle says, "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron;" that is, no man can be really a priest, a minister of God, as Aaron was, but such as are called and constituted by God himself, as he was. And they that do undertake the said ministry without such a call, what-

soever they may fancy or pretend, they are not God's ministers; and therefore all that they do is in vain and to no purpose, as the apostle saith elsewhere, "How shall they preach except they be sent?" They may speak the same words, deliver the same truths, press the same duties, as they do who are really God's ministers; but this is not preaching, properly so called; they do not publish and proclaim the will of God with any power or authority over their hearers, for they have received none from God, as not being called and sent by him.

All the efficacy that there is or can be in any ecclesiastical office depends altogether upon the Spirit of God going along with the office, and assisting at the execution of it, without which the sacraments they administer would be but empty signs, and their preaching no more than beating of the air; whereas, on the other side, Christ, according to his promise, being always present, by his Holy Spirit, at the administration of the several offices which he has ordained in his Church, they can never fail of their designed effect, if the persons to whom they are administered be but rightly disposed and qualified for it. By this means they that are duly baptised are "born again, not only of water, but of the Spirit also;" and so together with the "washing of regeneration" they have the "renewing of the Holy Ghost." Hence also, in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, the worthy receiver does really by faith partake of the mystical body and blood of Christ, and of such influences of the Holy Spirit as shall enable him to walk as becomes a member of Christ; and whensoever they read, preach, or publish the Gospel as Christ taught it, the Holy Spirit goes along with it, so that it becomes the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. This is no more than the fulfilment of Christ's promise to accompany his apostles and their successors to the end of

time ; he covenanted therein to vouchsafe his Spirit to those on whom they should lay their hands, and to co-operate by the same Spirit with those who are so ordained by them, in their administration of the word and sacraments.

BEVERIDGE.

He that is a God of order loves both to set and to keep it. For the service of his sanctuary he appointed several offices, and in those offices several degrees ; none of those might interfere with others. The Levites might not meddle with the priests' charge ; nor one degree of Levites with another. The porters might not thrust in among the singers, though, perhaps, some of their voices might be more tunable ; neither might the singers change places with the porters. The sons of Merari that were to carry the boards, bars, and pillars of the tabernacle and the court, might not change with the sons of Gershon for the lighter burden of the curtains and hangings ; nor those of Gershon for the more holy load of the vessels of the sanctuary, committed to the sons of Kohath ; neither might the sons of Kohath so much as go in to see the covering of those sacred utensils by Aaron and his sons upon pain of death. So punctual was God in setting every person his proper station, and holding him to it, without either neglect or change. And why should we think God less curious in his Evangelical Church ? It was the charge of him who next under the Almighty had the marshalling of the Churches of the Gentiles, " Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called." Perhaps there may be a much better head for policy upon plebeian shoulders than the governor's ; shall that man leave his rank, and thrust into the chair of government ? Neither is it other in spiritual offices. It is no thinking that the wise and holy God will be pleased with a well-meant confusion. For all our

employments in the service of the Almighty we must consult, not with our abilities, but with our calling.

HALL.

What angel in heaven could have said to man as our Lord did to Peter, "Feed my sheep: preach: baptise: do this in remembrance of me: whose sins ye retain, they are retained; and their offences in heaven pardoned, whose faults ye shall on earth forgive." What think ye? Are these terrestrial sounds? or else are they voices uttered out of the clouds above? The power of the ministry of God translateth out of darkness into glory; it raiseth men from the earth, and bringeth God himself down from heaven; by blessing visible elements it maketh them invisible grace; it giveth daily the Holy Ghost; it hath to dispose of that flesh which was given for the life of the world, and that blood which was poured out to redeem souls; when it poureth malediction upon the heads of the wicked, they perish; when it revoketh the same, they revive. Oh! wretched blindness, if we admire not so great power; more wretched, if we consider it aright, and notwithstanding imagine that any but God can bestow it.

HOOVER.

NATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT OF RELIGION.

Reason, experience, and holy Scripture, seem to put it beyond doubt, by their united testimony, that the system of a National Establishment is, in spite of all its imperfections, that very growing scheme by means of which will be finally accomplished that general and lasting renovation of human society which we are so strongly warranted to expect, but which neither reason nor experience would justify our expecting from the most powerful movements in the way of mere personal conversion.

A. KNOX.

The true interests of a Church are best to be ascertained by considering its nature. It is an organised body, governed by the laws and ministers of Christ, having the charge of the word, and exclusive administration of the sacraments, and dispensing both for the promotion of a spiritual life: its end, then, is to be the greatest holiness of the greatest number. The interest of all its living members constitutes the interest of the Church; and it is the production not of the greatest possible excitement connected with religion; nor of the greatest possible appearance of religion; nay, not even of the greatest possible quantity of actual religion at any time or place; but the greatest possible permanent and substantial amount of religion within that sphere over which its means of operation extend. Now, this object is best gained by the parochial system; for then the care of each minister is not for a few chosen individuals, but for a stated district. It is his business, as far as he is permitted, to administer the ordinances of religion to every living soul within that district. Not that his attentions are to be divided into shares of a strict equality, but none are to be excluded; and while he cherishes the best with peculiar fondness, his regards are ever to be directed towards the reclamation of the profligate, and the retention of the worldly minded within some, at least, of the restraints of religion; for the smallest degree of religious observance is better than none at all, because while there is life there is hope. This is the principle of a pure Establishment, which deems all spiritual life so precious, that it would gather and save up its very atoms, like the dust of gold. Not that she is satisfied with such a modicum of religion: she is ever busied in searching among the mass of nominal worshippers for the capable recipients of a vital and spiritual principle, and seeking to extract from each man whatever of

religious love and service he is capable of rendering. And while we see that our Established Church brings crowds of persons to the outer courts and lower steps of the temple, who would otherwise remain utterly remote from the sight and sounds of worship; we believe further that she is well calculated to use every effort for their advancement to those which are inner and higher. We do not believe that their Christianity is of an inferior quality because they belong to an Establishment; but, on the contrary, that it is, on the whole, more calm, more catholic, less alloyed by the contagion of spiritual pride and selfishness, more comprehensive in its views of the manifold duties and capacities of human life.

GLADSTONE.

REVELATION.

The will of his Maker is to man the law of his nature; for as God, when he created matter and endued it with a principle of mobility, established certain rules for the perpetual direction of that motion; so when he created man, and endued him with free-will so to conduct himself in all parts of life, he laid down certain immutable laws of human nature whereby that freewill is in some degree regulated and restrained, and gave him also the faculty of reason to discover the purport of those laws. And if our reason were always, as in our first ancestor before his transgression, clear and perfect, unruffled by passions, unclouded by prejudice, unimpaired by disease or intemperance, the task would be pleasant and easy; we should need no other guide but this. But every man now finds the contrary in his own experience; that his reason is corrupt, and his understanding full of ignorance and error.

This has given manifold occasion for the benign

interposition of divine Providence ; which, in compassion to the frailty, the imperfection, and the blindness of human reason, hath been pleased at sundry times and in divers manners to discover and enforce its laws by an immediate and direct revelation. The doctrines, thus delivered, we call the revealed or divine law, and they are to be found only in the holy Scriptures. The precepts, when revealed, are found upon comparison to be really a part of the original law of nature, as they tend in all their consequences to man's felicity. But we are not bound from thence to conclude that the knowledge of these truths is attainable by reason, in its present corrupted state ; since we find that until they were revealed, they were hid from the wisdom of ages. As then the moral precepts of this law are indeed of the same original with those of the law of nature, so their intrinsic obligation is of equal strength and perpetuity. Yet, undoubtedly, the revealed law is of infinitely more authenticity than that moral system which is framed by ethical writers, and denominated the natural law ; because one is the law of nature expressly declared so to be by God himself ; the other is only what, by the assistance of human reason, *we imagine* to be that law. If we could be as certain of the latter as we are of the former, both would have an equal authority : but till then they can never be put to any competition together.

BLACKSTONE.

HOLY SCRIPTURE.

The country parson is full of all knowledge. They say it is an ill mason that refuseth any stone : and there is no knowledge, but, in a skilful hand, serves either positively as it is, or else to illustrate some other knowledge. But the chief and top of

his knowledge consists in the book of books, the storehouse and magazine of life and comfort, the holy Scriptures. There he sucks and lives. In the Scriptures he finds four things; precepts for life, doctrines for knowledge, examples for illustration, and promises for comfort. These he hath digested severally.

But for the understanding of these, the means he useth are—first, a holy life; remembering what his Master saith, that “if any do God’s will, he shall know of the doctrine;” and assuring himself that wicked men, however learned, do not know the Scriptures, because they feel them not, and because they are not understood but by the same Spirit that writ them. The second means is prayer, which, if it be necessary, even in temporal things, how much more in things of another world, where “the well is deep, and we have nothing of ourselves to draw with!” Wherefore he can begin the reading of the Scripture with some short ejaculation, as, “Lord, open mine eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy law.” The third means is, a diligent comparison of Scripture with Scripture. For all truth being consonant to itself, and all being penned by one and the self-same Spirit, it cannot be but that an industrious and judicious comparing of place with place must be a singular help for the right understanding of the Scriptures. To this may be added, the consideration of any text with the coherence thereof, touching what goes before and what follows after; as also the scope of the Holy Ghost. The fourth means are, commentators and fathers, who have handled the places controverted; which the parson by no means refuseth. As he does not so study others as to neglect the grace of God in himself, and what the Holy Ghost teacheth him; so doth he assure himself that God in all ages hath had his ser-

vants, to whom he hath revealed his truth as well as to him; and that as one country doth not bear all things, that there may be a commerce; so neither hath God opened or will open all to one, that there may be a traffic in knowledge between the servants of God, for the planting both of love and of humility.

G. HERBERT.

I have carefully and regularly perused the holy Scriptures, and am of opinion that the volume contains more sublimity, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains of eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever language they may have been written.

SIR WILLIAM JONES.

THE DUTY OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT.

The personal responsibility of every individual in the investigation of religious truth is clearly implied in Scripture by the frequent appeals made by our Lord and his apostles to the conscience, the reason, and the judgment of *individual* Christians. This has been sometimes called the *right* of private judgment. It is more properly called the *duty* of private judgment. The word "right" implies (what is certainly true) that there was a time when the duty was improperly restrained. Hence it alludes to oppression, begets the thought of resistance to tyranny, fosters such a spirit of pride and independence as is unnatural, unchristian, and adverse to that very pursuit of truth which it professes to encourage. The "duty" of private judgment, on the other hand, suggesting nothing of independence, or jealousy, or hostility to others, directs our thoughts aright to ourselves, to our own responsibility, to the import-

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ance of religious truth, and consequently to the best modes of seeking the truth, and the best aids we can obtain in our pursuit of it. Nor is this an unimportant distinction; for the whole character of our investigation of religious truth will be affected, as we conceive we are asserting a right, or fulfilling a duty. Let the "right" of private judgment be our watchword, and we shall have a strong temptation to prove how well we can assert it by differing from the judgment of other men. The "duty" of private judgment directs the mind simply to the truth. Truth becomes our single aim. We feel that it is our duty to pursue it. We acknowledge that we are responsible, according to our means, native and acquired, within us and around us, for its attainment. We only rejoice if we are so happy as to accord with our brethren in the acknowledgment of the same truth. We are no longer under any temptation to sacrifice truth to a shew of independence. We are no longer in danger of being caught by the common fallacy, that those who agree with others, and with the Church of Christ, have not arrived at this agreement after as much exertion of mind, and even independence of judgment, as those who dissent from the Church.

The recognition of the "duty" of private judgment, moreover, overthrows that fearful reliance upon their own *sincerity* which some consider to be all in all, a full justification of every defect and every error. Not only must truth be our aim, but we are responsible for its attainment. If the means of attaining it are within our reach, then are we guilty if we do not attain the truth. We might, perhaps, at our pleasure or discretion, refrain from exercising a right; we are not permitted to decline a duty. It is not enough to say, we "love the Lord Jesus in sincerity," if we turn a deaf or careless ear

to his instructions, or neglect to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord." And sincerity is no longer an excuse for error, if we have slighted any means of ascertaining the truth which he has provided us, whether through the Scriptures or through the Church.

Lastly, the doctrine which we urge bids us rejoice (which the other view forbids) in the earliest possible introduction of religious truth into the mind; yes, even if the truth should afterwards be found to have been mixed up with error. For it recognises, first, the duty of the parent, the master, the Christian minister, to teach and spread what he believes to be the truth; and next, the duty of every Christian, according to his powers and opportunities, to try, prove, scrutinise, what he has so received—but in what spirit? not of suspicion, but of candour; not of distrust of others, but of simplicity, sincerity, and love of the truth itself. It teaches us, in a word, not to observe one portion of the apostolic precept, and neglect the other; but earnestly to desire both to "prove all things," and also to "hold fast that which is good."

HAWKINS.

PRAYER.

Prayer is not only an excellent means to obtain all blessings, but the very act itself is an elevation of the soul to contemplate the beauties of the divine nature, that by beholding such transcendent perfections, it may learn to love, desire to please, and delight to imitate so great and exact a pattern; and consequently it is a duty of the highest concernment, for it is an honour and a benefit to us, and yet it is accepted by God as our homage, and the testimony of our obedience.

COMBER.

Between the throne of God in heaven and his Church upon earth, if it be so that angels have their continual intercourse, where should we find the same more verified than in these two ghostly exercises—the one doctrine, the other prayer? For what is the assembling of the Church to learn, but the receiving of angels descended from above? what to pray, but the sending of angels upward? His heavenly inspirations and our holy desires are as so many angels of intercourse and commerce between God and us. As teaching bringeth us to know that God is our supreme truth, so prayer testifieth that we acknowledge him our sovereign good. On others what more easily, yet what more fruitfully, bestowed than our prayers? If we give counsel, they are the simpler sort only that need it; if alms, the poorer only are relieved; but by prayer we do good to all. And whereas every other duty besides is but to shew itself as time and opportunity require, for this all times are convenient: when we are not able to do any other thing for men's behoof; when, through maliciousness or unkindness, they vouchsafe not to accept any other good at our hands, prayer is that which we have always in our power to bestow, and they never in theirs to refuse. Therefore "God forbid," saith Samuel, speaking to a most unthankful people, a people weary of the benefits of his most virtuous government over them, "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you." It is the first thing wherewith a righteous life beginneth, and the last wherewith it doth end.

The knowledge is small which we have on earth concerning the things that are done in heaven. Notwithstanding, this much we know even of saints in heaven, that they pray; and therefore, prayer being a work common to the Church, as well triumphant as militant, a work common unto men with angels, what

should we think but that so much of our lives is celestial and divine as we spend in the exercise of prayer? For which cause we see that the most comfortable visitations which God hath sent men from above, have taken especially the times of prayer as their most natural opportunities. HOOKER.

The prayers of men have saved cities and kingdoms from ruin; prayer hath raised dead men to life, hath stopped the violence of fire; shut the mouths of wild beasts; hath altered the course of nature; caused rain in Egypt, and drought in the sea; it made the sun to go from west to east, and the moon to stand still, and rocks and mountains to walk; and it cures diseases without physic, and makes physic to do the work of nature, and nature to do the work of grace, and grace to do the work of God; and it does miracles of accident and event: and yet prayer, that does all this, is of itself nothing but an assent of the mind to God, a desiring of things fit to be desired, and an expression of this desire to God as we can, and as becomes us. And our unwillingness to pray is nothing else but a not desiring what we ought passionately to long for; or if we do desire it, it is a choosing rather to miss our satisfaction and felicity than to ask for it.

TAYLOR.

COMMON PRAYER.

This holy and religious duty of service towards God concerneth us one way that we are men; and another way in that we are joined as parts to that visible mystical body which is his Church. As men, we are at our own choice both for time and place and form, according to the exigence of our own occasions in private; but the service which we do as members of a public body is public, and for that cause

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must needs be accounted by so much worthier than the other, as a whole society of such condition exceedeth the worth of any one. In which consideration, unto Christian assemblies there are most special promises made. St. Paul, though likely to prevail with God as much as any one, did notwithstanding think it much more for God's glory and his own good, if prayers might be made and thanks yielded on his behalf by a number of men. The prince and people of Nineveh assembling themselves as a main army of supplicants, it was not in the power of God to withstand them. I speak no otherwise concerning the force of public prayer in the Church of God, than before me Tertullian hath done: "We come by troops to the place of assembly, that being banded, as it were, together, we may be supplicants enough to besiege God with our prayers; these forces are to him acceptable."

HOOKER.

Though private prayer be a brave design,
Yet public hath more promises, more love—
And love's a weight to hearts, to eyes a sign:
We all are but cold suitors; let us move
Where it is warmest. Leave thy six and seven—
Pray with the most—for, where most pray is heaven.

G. HERBERT.

When we publicly make our prayers, it cannot be but that we do it with much more comfort than in private, for that the things we ask publicly are approved as needful and good in the judgment of all who hear them sought for and desired with common consent. Again, thus much help and furtherance is more yielded, in that if so be our zeal and devotion to Godward be slack, the alacrity and fervour of others serveth as a present spur. Something, too, we are assisted by the sanctity and society of the place; for

in the church we pray and praise, having the angels for our associates (1 Cor. xi. 10). So that no one can come to the house of prayer without being moved with the very glory of the place itself, so to frame his affections, praying as does best beseem them whose suits the Almighty doth there sit to hear, and his angels attend to further. And as the place of public prayer is a circumstance in the outward form thereof which hath weight to help devotion ; so the person much more with whom the people of God do join themselves in this action, as with him that standeth and speaketh in the presence of God for them. The authority of his calling is a furtherance, because if God have so far received him into favour as to impose upon him, by the hands of men, that office of blessing the people in his name, and making intercession to him in theirs ; which office he hath sanctified by his own most gracious promise, and ratified that promise by manifest actual performance thereof, when others before him in like manner have done the same ; is not his very ordination a seal, as it were, to us, that the self-same divine love which hath chosen the instrument to work with, will, by that instrument, effect the thing whereunto he ordained it, in blessing his people and accepting the prayers which his servant offereth up unto God for them ?

HOOKER.

A FORM OF PRAYER.

But of all helps for due performance of the service of public prayer, the greatest is that very set and standing order itself, which, framed with common advice, hath, both for matter and form, prescribed whatsoever is herein publicly done. No doubt from God it hath proceeded, and by us it must be acknowledged a work of his singular care and providence,

that the Church hath evermore held a prescript form of common prayer, although not in all things every where the same, yet for the most part retaining still the same resemblance. So that if the liturgies of all ancient Churches throughout the world be compared amongst themselves, it may easily be perceived they had all one original mould, and that the public prayers of the people of God in Churches thoroughly settled, did never use to be voluntary dictates proceeding from any man's extempore wit.

HOOKER.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

When the disciples came and asked our Lord for such a form of prayer as the doctors among them were wont to give to their scholars, to be a badge of their profession, he prescribed this set form, which for words and phrases he took out of the Jewish forms with little variation, to shew how far he was from all affectation of novelty in devotion. And certainly we may discern in it a lively resemblance of its Author, who was the highest and the lowest, the greatest and the least, God and man. The comprehensiveness of it is the admiration of the wisest, the plainness suiting still the meanest capacity ; for it is so clear that all may understand it, so short that any may learn it, so full as to take in all our wants, and so exact as to shew us what we should be, as well as what we should ask, and is the epitome of the Gospel. Herein we glorify God in desiring his honour may be made manifest, and are mindful of ourselves in praying for all graces, reverence and fear, sanctification and purity, submission and obedience active and passive, faith and love, diligence and zeal, constancy and perseverance ; and for our bodies we beg food and raiment, health and strength, riches and

friends, a good name and a long life, so far as they are good for us.

We look back to our sins past, and humbly crave remission ; we look forward, first to our duty, engaging ourselves in purposes of holy charity, and then to our danger, earnestly entreating his preventing grace and pity may preserve us from sin and punishment, the snares of men and devils : finally, we look upward in a humble acknowledgment of his goodness, his greatness, and just deservings of all honour and glory from us and all the world. In this one form, as we represent all our wants, so we exercise all graces : here is our belief of God's goodness, our persuasion of his love, our desire after his holiness, our subjection to his authority, and hope of his kingdom, our willingness to suffer, and readiness to do his will : here we declare our dependence on his providence, and contentedness with his dispensations, our penitence for former sins, and resolutions of amendment, our sense of our own frailty, and our trust in his mercy and grace ; and all this ending with acts of faith and love, joy and praise, devotion and adoration. So that this divine form is fitted for all times, and all places, and all persons : the ignorant must use it, because he may understand it ; the knowing, that he may understand it better ; the sinner, that he may be holy ; the holy man, lest he become a sinner ; the rich prays thus for the sanctification of his gifts, the poor for the supply of his wants. In private it extends to particular needs ; in public it unites us all into one soul, and makes us equally desire others' good with our own, being indited in a public style ; so that though it be useful every where, yet it is especially fitted for the assemblies of the Church, where all antiquity used it as the salt of all the offices, and we in imitation of them.

What zeal, then, and height of devotion can be sufficient to offer up this prayer? How sure is it of acceptance, which is stamped with Christ's image, signed with his hand, and sent in his name! His power will make it prevalent, and God's love to his dear Son will make it acceptable; for what can pierce the ears or melt the heart of a tender father more readily than the voice of his only and beloved son? Use it, therefore, reverently and heartily, and doubtless you will be accepted.

COMBER.

THE PSALMS.

The holy Gospels and Epistles contain, indeed, the words of eternal life, words by which we must be saved; and therefore should be sweeter to us than honey or the honey-comb, more precious than gold, yea, than much fine gold; but they are not of so continued use as David's Psalms, which are digested forms of prayers, thanksgivings, praises, confessions and adorations, fit for every temper and every time. Here the penitent hath a form of confession; he that hath received a benefit, hath a thanksgiving; he that is in any kind of need, bodily or ghostly, hath a prayer; all have lauds, and all may adore the several excellencies of Almighty God in David's forms; and these a man may safely use, being composed by the Spirit of God, which cannot err; whereas other books of prayers and devotions are for the most part composed by private men, subject to error and mistake, whose fancies, sometimes wild ones, are commended us for matter of devotion, and we may be taught to blaspheme while we intend to adore; or at least to abuse our devotion when we approach to the throne of grace, and offer up an unclean beast instead of a holy sacrifice.

SPARROW.

THE DOXOLOGY, OR GLORIA PATRI.

This is the Christian's both hymn and shorter creed. For what is the sum of the Christian's faith but the mystery of the Holy Trinity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which neither Jew nor pagan, but only the Christian believes, and in this doxology professes against all heretics old and new? And as it is a short creed, so also is it a most excellent hymn; for the glory of God is the end of our creation, and should be the aim of all our services—whatsoever we do should be done to the glory of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: and this is all that we can, either by word or deed, give to God, namely, glory. Therefore this hymn fitly serves to close any of our religious services, our praises, prayers, thanksgivings, confessions of sins, or faith. Since all these we do to glorify God, it cannot be unfitting to close with "Glory be to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." It cannot easily be expressed how useful this divine hymn is upon all occasions. If God Almighty sends us prosperity, what can we better return him than glory? If he sends adversity, it still befits us to say, "Glory be to the Father," &c. Whether we receive good, or whether we receive evil at the hands of God, we cannot say a better "grace" than "Glory be to the Father." In a word, we cannot better begin the day when we awake, nor conclude the day when we go to sleep, than by "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost." SPARROW.

THE CREED.

Faith is rightly called a shield: when we are affrighted, run we to the creed, and say, "I believe in

God the Father Almighty ;" this will guard your soul from fear. If you be tempted to despair, guard your soul with the creed, say, "I believe in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived," &c.: that may secure your soul from despair. If you be tempted to pride, run to the creed, and a sight of Christ hanging upon the cross will humble you. If to lust or uncleanness, run to the creed, and see the wounds of Christ, and the remembrance of them, if any thing, will quench that fiery dart. If we be tempted to presume and grow careless, take up again this shield of faith, see Christ in the creed coming to judgment, and this terror of the Lord's will persuade men. In a word, the creed is a guard and defence against all the temptations of the world, all the fiery darts of the devil, all the filthy lusts of the flesh. Therefore, "above all take the shield of faith," saith St. Paul, of which the creed is the symbol.

SPARROW.

THE LITANY.

Concerning the Litany of our Church, we may boldly affirm, and easily maintain it, that there is not extant any where a more particular excellent enumeration of all the Christian's, either private or common, wants ; nor (2) a more innocent, blameless form, against which there lies no just exception ; nor (3) a more skilful composition for raising our devotion and keeping it up throughout, than this part of our Liturgy. In the beginning, it directs our prayers to the right object, the glorious Trinity ; for necessary it is we should know whom we worship. Then it proceeds to deprecations or prayers against evils ; lastly, to petitions for good. In the deprecations, as right method requires, we first

pray against sin, then against punishment; because sin is the greatest evil. From all which we pray to be delivered by the holy actions and passions of Christ, the only meritorious cause of all our good. First we pray for the Catholic Church, the common mother of all Christians; next for our own Church, to which, next the Church Catholic, we owe the greatest observance and duty. And therein, in the first place, for the principal members of it, in whose welfare the Church's peace chiefly consists. After this we pray particularly for those sorts of men that most especially need our prayers. The Litany is not one long continued prayer, but broken into many pithy ejaculations; that the earnestness and devotion which is most necessary in prayer may not be dulled and vanish, as in a long prayer it is apt to do, but be quickened and refreshed by so many new petitions; and the nearer to the end, the shorter and livelier it is, strengthening our devotions by raising in us an apprehension of our misery and distress, ready, as it were, to sink and perish, and therefore crying out, as the disciples did, "Master, save us; we perish."

SPARROW.

THE LITURGY.

In a word, in our Church-service we repent and pray; we rejoice and pray; we thank God and pray; we read and pray; we hear and pray; we preach and pray; we receive the sacraments and pray. This is the order of our Church, which may well be called the house of prayer. Jacob, when he awaked from the dream of the ladder, said, "How reverend is this place; it is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven!" So I say unto you, Oh, how reverend is this Church of England, where God is

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thus served ! Surely it is the house of God, and this serving of him is the gate of heaven.

FRANCIS MASON.

NOVELTY IN DEVOTION.

St. Paul teacheth the art of heavenly thrift, how to make a new sermon of an old. "Many (saith he), walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are enemies to the cross of Christ." Formerly he had told it with his tongue, but now with his tears ; formerly he taught it with his words, but now with weeping. Thus new affections make an old sermon new. May I not, by the same proportion, make an old prayer new ? Lord, thus long have I offered my prayer dry unto thee ; now, Lord, I offer it wet. Then wilt thou own some new addition therein, when, though the sacrifice be the same, yet the dressing of it is different, being steeped in his tears who bringeth it unto thee.

FULLER.

Whereas some may account it much spiritualness to despise what they have heard before, and to desire continued variety in prayer, it seems rather to be want of spiritualness that makes that needful, for that we find not our affections lively in that holy exercise, unless they be awaked and stirred up by new expressions ; whereas the soul that is earnest on the thing itself, for itself, panting after the grace of God and for the pardon of sin, regards not in what terms it be uttered, whether new or old ; yea, though it be in those words it hath heard and uttered a thousand times, yet still it is new to a spiritual mind. And surely the desires that do move in that constant way have more evidence of sincerity and true vigour in them, than those that depend upon new notions

and words to move them, and cannot stir without them. It may be, it is no other but a false flash of temporary devotion, that arises in a man's heart, which comes by some moving strain of prayer that is new. But when confessions of sin, and requests of pardon, though in never so low and accustomed terms, carry his heart along with them heavenward, it is then more sure that the Spirit of God dwelling in him, and the sense of the things themselves, the esteem of the blood of Christ, and the favour of God, do move the heart, when there is no novelty of words to help it. Beware that in fancying continual variety in prayer, there be not more of the flesh than of the spirit, and the head working more than the heart; for (mistake it not), the spirit of prayer hath not its seat in the invention, but in the affection. In this many deceive themselves, in that they think the work of this spirit of prayer to be mainly in furnishing new supplies of thoughts and words; no, it is mainly in exciting the heart anew, at times of prayer, to break forth itself in ardent desires to God, whatever the words be, whether new or old, yea, possibly without words.

LEIGHTON.

SPECIALTIES OF DEVOTION.

These are the generalities of our devotion, which are of common use to all Christians. There are, besides these, certain specialties of it, applicable to several occasions, times, places, persons. For there are morning and evening devotions; devotions proper to our board, to our closet, to our bed; to God's day, to our own; to health, to sickness; to our several callings, to our recreations; to the way, to the field, to our home; to the student, to the soldier, to the magistrate, to the minister; to the husband, wife,

child, servant ; to our own persons, to our families : the severalties whereof, as they are scarce finite for number, so are most fit to be left to the judgment and holy managing of every Christian ; neither is it to be imagined that any soul which is taught of God, and hath any acquaintance with heaven, can be to seek in the particular application of common rules to his own necessity or expedience. HALL.

CONVERSION.

Some there are who exact of every Christian, as a touchstone of their sincerity, to render an account of the exact time of their conversion, with the circumstances thereof ; how, when, and where performed. I must crave leave to enter myself a dissentient herein, conceiving such a demand unreasonable, as generally required essential to all true believers. I confess some may return a satisfactory answer thereunto ; namely, such whose souls, suddenly snatched out of error and viciousness, were immediately wrought upon, almost in an instant, by the Spirit of God. Thus, of those three thousand gained on Many-Saints' Day by St. Peter at Jerusalem with the preaching of one sermon (Acts, ii. 41), each one might punctually and precisely tell the very moment of their true conversion ; and generally the *worse* men have been, the *better* they can point at the accurate date thereof.

This is not the case with all true believers. God, to shew his power that he can, and pleasure that he will, vary the manner of men's conversion (though going the same path by his word and Spirit), useth a slower pace in the hearts of others, in whom grace is wrought gently and imperceptibly, and modelled by degrees ; in such no mortal man can assign the

minutary juncture of time, when preparing grace (which cleared the ground) ended, and saving grace (which finished the fabric of conversion) did first begin.

Observable to this purpose are the words of our Saviour: "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep and rise, night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how," (Mark, iv. 26). That grace is sown, and is grown, men know; but when and how in the persons aforesaid, God knows.

Besides these adult converts, there are a second sort of Christians unable to discover the date of grace dawning in them; namely, such who, with Timothy (2 Tim. i. 5; iii. 15), may be said to be good time out of mind, sucking in grace with their milk, extracted from and educated under a pious parentage, [baptised as infants into the body of the Redeemer]. I hope and trust your honour may truly be ranked in this latter form, that as many ancient deeds (written before the reign of King Henry III.) are commonly without any date, grace, in like manner, will arise so early in your heart (advantaged by your goodly birth and breeding), that you shall not remember the beginning thereof.

However, to make sure work, it will be safest to examine yourself, when arrived at age, what eminent accessions and additions of grace you can remember, with the place and time when the same were effectually wrought in your soul, and what bosom-sin you have conquered. Especially take notice of your solemn reconciling to God, after repentance for some sin committed. David, no doubt, in some sort, may be said to be born good, God being his hope when "in the womb," when he "hanged yet upon his mother's breast," trusting in him and taught by him from his youth. Now, though probably he could

not remember his first and general conversion, he could recount his re-conversion, after his foul offences of adultery and murder, as by his penitential psalm doth plainly appear. Otherwise, those who boast themselves converted before memory (by the privilege of their pious infancy), if they can recover no memorials of their repentance after relapse, and produce no time nor tokens thereof, are so far from being good from their cradle, it is rather suspicious they will be bad to their coffin, if not labouring for a better spiritual estate.

And now let me recommend to your childhood the reading of the "Holy Scriptures" as the apostle calls them: *holy* in the fountain, flowing from the Holy Spirit inditing them: *holy* in the conduit-pipe, derived through holy men penning them: *holy* in the liquor, teaching and directing to holiness: *holy* in the cistern, working sanctity in such as worthily receive them, and making them wise unto salvation.

FULLER.

1. Preparatory grace being sometimes longer and sometimes shorter, and the first degree of special grace being usually very small, it is not possible that one of very many should be able to give any true account of the just time when special grace began.—
2. The rational operations of the highest faculties (the intellect and the will), may, without great passion, set God and things spiritual highest within us, and give them the pre-eminence, and subject all carnal interests to them, and give them the government of the heart and life; and this is the ordinary state of a believer.—
3. Education is God's ordinary way for the conveyance of grace, and ought no more to be set in opposition to the Spirit than the preaching of the word; and it was the great mercy of God to begin with me so soon, and to prevent such as

might else have been my shame and sorrow while I lived; and that repentance is good, but prevention and innocence better—which, though we cannot attain in perfection, the more the better. The soul of a believer groweth up by degrees.—4. God breaketh not all men's hearts alike. The change of the heart from sin is true repentance, and the loathing of ourselves is true humiliation; and he who leaves sin is neither without true repentance nor the love of God.

BAXTER.

When the conversion in Scripture was sudden or instantaneous, it was the consequence of miraculous evidence to the truth. Such was the conversion of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost (Acts, ii. 41); of the five thousand who beheld the miracle wrought by Peter and John (Acts, iv. 4); of the jailer (Acts, xvi.); of Paul (Acts, ix.); of Sergius Paulus (Acts, xiii. 12). Others were more gradual: such was the case with the converts at Antioch (Acts, xiii. 42). At Thessalonica St. Paul reasoned with the people "three Sabbath-days" (Acts, xvii. 2). And, in the same chapter, the Bereans are especially commended for "searching the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (ver. 11).

MANT.

 EARLY PIETY.

True it is that the young are often strongly tempted by the love of pleasure, by the lusts and fancies of the flesh, by sheer thoughtlessness; still, the aid and assistances which Heaven offers them will counterbalance the temptation, if, instead of putting themselves in the way of it, or easily yielding to it, they are early taught to fly to God, their protector and

Father, and to pray to him to defend and strengthen them. He who hath commanded them to "flee youthful lusts," and to "keep themselves unspotted from the world," does not give them commands which it is impossible to perform, but for which his grace is sufficient: and happy, happy are they, if the natural warmth and generosity of youth is so sanctified by God's Holy Spirit as to disdain the slavery of sin, and to prefer the free service of their Creator! Youth is the best season for learning every thing; sciences, arts, or labours, which are acquired by an habitual exercise of mind and body; and though religion is not a science of the mind, nor a work of the hands, but somewhat of a higher kind, in which the grace of God is the first mover, yet it so far partakes of the nature of human attainments, as to go on most happily by being begun early: for who will say, it is as easy to bring a plant straight again that is grown out of its regular shape and bent towards the earth, as to use the proper means of supporting and strengthening it, that it may rise upright from the first?—or that it is as easy to restore the whiteness of paper that is scrawled over and blotted with ink, as it would have been to preserve it clean and unsullied? It is certain, from many instances in Scripture, that the young who, enlisting under the banner of Christ from their infancy, faithfully discharge their duty as his servants and soldiers in the spring and prime of early life; who, while they have health and spirits to enjoy the pleasures of sin, renounce them in obedience to their heavenly Father, and give up the gratification of their passions and appetites to his commands, bring an offering before him which he is well pleased to accept; as when Abel, with a duteous and religious mind, brought him the firstlings of his flock. What portion of sacred history is more interesting than the account of the infant Samuel? He was dedicated by

pious parents to the house and service of God from his cradle. He piously and heartily assented to their act; was distinguished by early marks of the Divine favour; and was established to be a judge and prophet in Israel.

TOWNSON.

THE TRAINING OF THE MIND.

A sound moral discipline and a well-regulated mind can alone, under God, carry a man through life, so that he shall not be the sport and victim of every change that flits across the scene. And it cannot be too anxiously borne in mind, that this great attainment is, in a remarkable degree, under the influence of habit. Each step that we take in the prosecution of it will facilitate our further progress, and every day that passes over us without making it the object of earnest attention, the acquirement becomes the more difficult and the more uncertain; and a period at length arrives, when no power exists in the mind capable of correcting the disorder which habit has fixed. The frivolous mind may then continue frivolous to the last, amusing itself with trifles, or creating for itself fictions of the fancy, no better than dreams, and as unprofitable; the distorted mind may continue to the last eagerly pursuing its perverted speculations, while it is departing further and further from the truth; and the vitiated and corrupted mind may continue to the last the slave of its impure and degrading passions. Such is the power and such the result of mental habits; and let us ever bear in mind, how such habits are formed. They arise out of individual acts of the mind; and we have not the means of determining what number of such acts are necessary for forming the habits, and at what period these shall gain a mastery which shall peril the highest

interests of the soul. We cannot determine how many acts of frivolity may constitute the permanently frivolous mind; how many trains of impurity may constitute the permanently corrupted mind; or what degrees of inattention to the diligent culture of the powers within may be fatal to the best interests of the man, both as an intellectual and a moral being. Hence the supreme importance of cultivating in early life the mastery of the mind, and of watching with earnest attention the trains of thought which we encourage there; as we cannot determine at what period a habit may be formed, the influence of which shall be permanent and irremediable.

ABERCROMBIE.

HUMILITY.

Humility is the greatest ornament and jewel of Christian religion, that whereby it is distinguished from all the wisdom of the world; it not having been taught by the wise men of the Gentiles, but first put into a discipline and made part of a religion by our Lord Jesus Christ, who propounded himself imitable by his disciples so signally in nothing as in the twin sisters, meekness and humility: "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Remember what thou wert before thou wert begotten—nothing. What wert thou in the first regions of thy dwelling, before thy birth? Uncleaness. What wert thou for many years after? Weakness. What in all thy life? A great sinner. What in all thy excellencies? A mere debtor to God, to thy parents, to the earth, to all the creatures. Consider: 1. The spirit of a man is light and troublesome. 2. His body is brutish and sickly. 3. He is constant in his

folly and error, and inconstant in his manners and good purposes. 4. His labours are vain, intricate, and endless. 5. His fortune is changeable, and seldom pleasing, and never perfect. 6. His wisdom comes not till he is ready to die, that is, till he is past using it. 7. His death is certain, always ready at the door, but never far off. Upon these or the like meditations, if we dwell, or frequently retire to them, we shall see nothing more reasonable than to be humble, and nothing more foolish than to be proud. For all the world, all that we are, and all that we have, our bodies and our souls, our actions and our sufferings, our conditions at home, our accidents abroad, our many sins and our seldom virtues, are as so many arguments to make our souls dwell low in the deep valleys of humility.

TAYLOR.

There is small chance of truth at the goal, where there is not a child-like simplicity at the starting-post.

LEIGHTON.

RETIREDNESS.

I must remember you, that in the greatest, most open, and full manifestations of the glory of God upon Jesus, he was very private too, and cared not for having it published and talked of abroad in the world. When he was transfigured in the holy mount, you read that he went aside privately with a few of his disciples; which may well commend to you the love of retirement. And that brightness, also, wherewith he was clothed, he commanded to be concealed, as a great secret, till a fit season to divulge it; which may well teach us to keep to ourselves what passes between God and our souls, till others may be concerned in it as much as ourselves. You may refer

this, perhaps, to the humility of his spirit; but yet I thought good to advise you of it alone, because it deserves a particular consideration. There is a vanity you may be guilty of, if you heed not this, of glorying, when you come abroad again, of the secret communication you have had with Jesus in the time of your solitude. For I observe it is the genius of some who profess acquaintance with him, when they feel any delicious joys exceeding the common sort (which perhaps are granted only in favour of their weakness, and intended merely to cherish their present childish condition), to blaze them every where, and report them to others, without any great occasion for it. They think it a piece of religion to communicate their experiences to the next passenger they meet with. They love that others should know how nobly they are treated; and so they lay a double snare, one for themselves, by the high conceit which they may raise in others of their excellencies; and a second for their neighbours, by the discouragement they may feel for want of such elevations. If your spirit, therefore, be at any time transported; if God shine into your heart very brightly, and darken all this world in your eyes by causing his glory to cover you, I beseech you cast a cloud about it, that no one else may see it, unless the good of others make it necessary that it should be revealed. Draw a veil over your face when it is so radiant, lest, by shining too brightly upon others, it hurt their eyes, and the reflection of it prove dangerous to yourself. As when you are in the world, you must not forget to be private with God, so when you have been most with God, it is safest to keep it private from the world.

PATRICK.

THE VALUE AND USE OF EXCITED FEELINGS IN
RELIGION.

When sinners are first led to think seriously, strong feelings usually precede or attend their reflections about themselves. The view of their manifold sins, their guilt, and their heinous ingratitude towards their God and Saviour breaking upon them, strikes, astonishes, and agitates them. Here, then, let them know the intention of all this excitement of mind in the order of divine Providence. It is not religion itself, though it is accidentally connected with it, and may be made the means of leading them into a sound, religious course of life : it is graciously designed to be a set-off against the first distastefulness and pain of doing their duty. Learn, therefore, to obey promptly these strong feelings, and, as it were, the graceful beginnings of obedience — graceful and becoming in children, but in grown spiritual men indecorous and unseemly, as the sports of boyhood would be in advanced years. Hasten to use them while they last (for soon will they die away), and you may have made an effectual commencement in reformation. Many and grievous are the mistakes of men upon this head. Some look upon the turbid zeal and feverish devotion which attend their repentance, not as, in fact, the corrupt offspring of their previously corrupt state of mind, and partly a providential provision, only temporary, to encourage them to set about their amendment, but as the substance and real excellence of religion. They think to be thus agitated is to be religious ; they indulge themselves in the luxury of these warm feelings as long as they last ; and when they begin, in natural course, to subside, they resort to the more powerful stimulants of new doctrine and strange teachers, while no advance has been made in prac-

tical religion. Others, again, on their awakening, despise plain obedience, as a mere unenlightened morality, and think that they are called to some high and singular office in the Church of Christ. These *mistake* their duty, as those already described *neglect* it: they do not waste their time in mere good thoughts and good words, as the others, but they are impetuously led on to wrong acts; and that from the influence of those same strong emotions, which they have not learned to use aright, or to direct to their proper end. Now, the error of both these classes of persons is the error of the restored demoniac (Luke, viii. 38), who "besought Jesus" in vain that he might "continue with him." They desire to keep themselves in Christ's immediate presence, instead of "returning to their own home" (as he would have them), *i. e.* to the common duties of life. They must learn to live by faith; which is a calm, deliberate, rational principle, full of peace and comfort, and which sees Christ and rejoices in him, though sent away from his presence to labour in the world. Let them return to their old occupations and pursuits: they did them ill before, they lived to the world; let them do them well now, and live to God. Let them do their duties, little as well as great, heartily for Christ's sake; go among their friends; shew them what God has done for them; be an example to them, and teach them.

NEWMAN.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN SPIRITUAL AND SENSUAL DELIGHTS.

Lest you should think the pleasures of religion to be other than they are, it will concern you to distinguish carefully between those consolations that are spiritual, and those that are sensual. Man is

made up of two parts—a soul and body ; and these, by reason of the nearness of connexion, mutually affect each other ; and the pleasures of one redound to the other. Hence bodily health, and the discreet use of outward enjoyments, imparts an activity to the mind ; and on the contrary part, when the mind converses with heavenly things, they so powerfully touch it at certain seasons, that they make a motion there all over, even to the very skirts of its territories ; the heart is glad ; the spirits leap and dance for joy ; and the very blood in our veins runs the smoother for it. Now, it is not necessary to slight these sensible consolations which the body yields to the mind ; but they must not be over-valued ; nor, when they fail, must we be dejected. Let the mind in this state recollect itself, and consider that, for its part, it doth what it did before, though it doth not feel itself and perceive its power in the same manner ; and that it is not bound to produce these pleasurable emotions in the lower man ; and that they are more pleasing to us than to God ; and it may presently have rational satisfaction and tranquillity in its own breast, which is the best of all other joys, and be persuaded to hold on in its course notwithstanding this seeming discouragement. And if the mind, by these or such-like considerations, be induced to do as it was wont, then I cannot see but all its performances would be both more acceptable to God, and in the issue more delightful to itself ; for there is more strength of a man's reason and will in them, now that he wants that pleasing assistance which the body used to afford him in the doing of them. His love to God is more fervent and unconquerable, in that it will not cease its motion towards him, though all things else fail it but only the force of its own inclination. He is not, in true understanding, more weak and feeble now, but a person of greater might

and courage than he was before ; for it is far better when the mind influences the body, than when the body influences the mind.

The senses are affected through the eyes and ears, and those stirrings in the blood which outward objects create. Such delights can have but little intrinsic worth,—nay, they may be dangerous ; for they may take off the mind, in the exercise of a devotional act, from its own proper spiritual pleasures. Thus, the papist finds himself more stirred in kneeling before a crucifix, or an image of the blessed virgin, than in the spiritual and rational worship of the glorified Redeemer. And thus, also, many warm souls think themselves very religious because they are moved at a sermon, or can weep in their prayers ; while they remain as cold as a stone, and as dry as a rotten stick, to all good works. They are covetous, peevish, proud, and censorious ; and yet these ill qualities do not trouble them, as long as they feel those pleasing motions, which tickle them into a belief that they be beloved of God, though they be no better than they were.

PATRICK.

ZEAL.

The sum is this : zeal is not a direct duty—no where commanded for itself—and is nothing but a forwardness and circumstance of another duty ; and therefore is then only acceptable when it advances the love of God and our neighbours, whose circumstance it is. That zeal is only safe, only acceptable, which increases charity directly ; and because love to our neighbour, and obedience to God, are the two great portions of charity, we must never account our zeal to be good but as it advances both these, if it be in a matter that relates to both ; or

severally, if it relates severally. St. Paul's zeal was expressed in preaching without any offerings or stipend; in travelling; in spending, and being spent, for his flock; in suffering; in being willing to be accursed for the love of the people of God and his countrymen. Let our zeal be as great as was his, so it be in affections to others, but not at all in anger against them: in the first there is no danger; in the second there is no safety. In brief, let your zeal (if it must be expressed in anger) be always more severe against thyself than against others. Let it be seated in the will and in the choice, and regulated with prudence and a sober understanding, not in the fancies and affections; for these will make it full of noise, and empty of profit; but that will make it deep and smooth, material and devout. TAYLOR.

This, indeed, was the saddest thing of all to his thoughts, that their heat and passion they had the confidence to baptise into the names of holy zeal; and that which was but the love of their own opinion, they constantly miscalled the love of God and of his truth. Though these dogs (as I have already said) were very frozen and cold, yet they cudgelled one another so long till they grew hot; and then they cried, the weather was very warm, and the sun in his highest elevation. God's enemies they thought they opposed in their own; and they fancied themselves engaged against sin, while they were buffeting a contrary opinion. There was no heat but they took it for divine, though it were of their own kindling; and so they were but all on fire, they never doubted but it was from heaven; for there was no sin in those days like moderation. PATRICK.

RELIGION NOT IN WORD, BUT IN POWER.

The description of religion may be made so full of pleasure, that an earthly man may be ravished therewith; and he, hearing also certain signs and marks given of those who are said to have an interest in Christ, and shall be heirs of his everlasting kingdom, it is very easy to conceive how a man may set himself a-work first to imprint his fancy with such characters, and then to form his passions to some expression and apish imitation of them. Fancy, you know, has a great command over all the passions; and being acquainted very well with the way to them, and the manner of awakening them, can call them forth upon this occasion as easily as upon any other. It can make them as busy, when these divine matters present themselves, as when sensible objects knock at our doors, and demand to be admitted to our converse. There are no names of dearness which men of this stamp cannot bestow upon Jesus. They can speak of him with a high pleasure; and pray in a pathetic style, and not without devout transport; they find a love to this kind of communion with him; they can rejoice to think of his fulness and sufficiency; they can be astonished at the freeness of his grace; they can mourn for their sins, and then call themselves blessed for so doing. Nay, more than this, they can excite the passion of gratitude; and if they hear, withal, that they must be regenerated and born again, they can follow the fancy of that so long, till they think they feel the throes and pangs of the new birth,—a change wrought in their souls, and all the rest, in the method and order wherein they had it described to them. They will first be cast down in great humiliations; they will complain of the naughtiness of their hearts, and the corruptions of their natures; they will loathe and abhor themselves

as abominable creatures ; they will disclaim all their own righteousness and strength, and think of bringing their hearts to the promise. And if they have heard any better language to express this work, they will bring themselves to an imitation of all that is contained in that also. They cannot sufficiently detest their former courses.

Thus is one of the *religious puppets* of the world produced. This is the beginning and progress of that piece of work which a good man, now at rest, was wont to call a mechanical religion. Now, that we may be sure that you are not such an unsubstantial Christian, you must let those that approach you perceive that Christ liveth in you, by “shewing forth your works out of a good conversation.” You must make the world sensible of your exact justice, your unfeigned charity, your self-denial, your patience, your peaceableness, and, above all, your meekness, humility, and modesty of spirit ; that, if they had a mind, they may not have the face to say you have but the semblance and apish imitation of piety.

PATRICK.

CONTENTEDNESS.

Virtues are like friends, necessary in all fortunes ; but those are the best which are friends in our sadnesses, and support us in our sorrows and sad accidents ; and in this sense, no man that is virtuous can be friendless ; nor hath any man reason to complain of the divine Providence, or accuse the public disorder of things, or his own infelicity, since God has appointed one remedy for all the evils in the world—and that is, a contented spirit. For this alone makes a man pass through fire, and not be scorched ; through seas, and not be drowned ; through hunger and nakedness, and want nothing.

For since all the evil in the world consists in the disagreeing between the object and the appetite—as when a man hath what he desires not, or desires what he hath not, or desires amiss—he that composes his spirit to the present accident hath variety of instances for his virtue, but none to trouble him; because his desires enlarge not beyond his present fortune; and a wise man is placed in the variety of chances, like the nave or centre of a wheel in the midst of all the circumvolutions and changes of posture, save that it turns gently, in compliance with its changed part, and is indifferent which part is up and which is down: for there is some virtue or other to be exercised, whatever happens; either patience or thanksgiving, love or fear, moderation or humility, charity or contentedness; and they are every one of them in order to his great end and immortal felicity. Contentedness in all estates is a duty of religion; it is the great reasonableness of complying with the divine Providence which governs all the world, and hath so ordered us in the administration of his great family. And He whose mercy and wisdom shines so brightly every where would never have suffered so many sadnesses, and have sent them especially to the most virtuous and wisest men, but that he intends these should be the seminary of comfort, the nursery of virtue, the exercise of wisdom, the trial of patience, the venturing for a crown, and the gate of glory.

TAYLOR.

GOD TO BE SERVED IN ALL STATIONS OF LIFE.

She arrived at her perfections by the means of a quiet and silent piety, the internal actions of love, devotion, and contemplation; and instructs us that not only those who have opportunity and powers of a magnificent religion, or a pompous charity, or

miraculous conversion of souls, or assiduous and effectual preachings, or exterior demonstrations of corporal mercy, shall have the greatest crowns, and the addition of degree and accidental rewards : but the silent affections, the splendours of an internal devotion, the unions of love, humility, and obedience ; the daily offices of prayer and praises sung to God ; the acts of faith and fear, of patience and meekness, of hope and reverence, repentance and charity, and those graces which walk in a veil and silence, make great ascents to God, and as sure progress to favour and a crown, as the more ostentatious and laborious exercises of a more solemn religion. No man needs to complain of want of power or opportunities for religious perfections : a devout woman in her closet, praying with much zeal and affection for the conversion of souls, is in the same order to a “ shining like the stars in glory,” as he who, by excellent discourses, puts it into a more forward disposition to be actually performed. And possibly her prayers obtained energy and force to my sermon, and made the ground fruitful, and the seed spring up to life eternal.

TAYLOR.

MIRACLES.

When the angel brought St. Peter out of prison, the iron gate opened of its own accord ; but coming to the house of Mary, the mother of John, mark, he was fain to stand before the door and knock. When iron gave obedience, how can wood make opposition ?

The answer is easy. There was no man to open the iron gate ; but a portress was provided, of course, to unlock the door. God would not therefore shew his finger when man's hands are appointed to do the work. Heaven will not superinstitute a miracle where ordinary means were formerly in

peaceable possession. But if they either depart or resign (ingenuously confessing their insufficiency), then miracles succeed in their vacancy.

FULLER.

DIVISIONS IN RELIGION.

I may, I think, assume, that to minister in the same profession of religion, and in the same exercises of devotion, to which our friends and fellow-Christians adhere, is and must be good, if we can so unite conscientiously.

PENROSE.

Though an error is not to be permitted in any Church, when it can be peaceably amended (and when it can not, it is, as often as it can be peaceably, to be discouraged), yet when the necessity of tolerating it is great, and the evil feared in any attempt to remove it is certain, and felt, and is intolerable, it is a sad necessity, but no man can help it, and therefore it must be as it may; the lesser error is to be endured till it can be remedied with a remedy that is not worse than the disease.

TAYLOR.

Though we weigh never so exactly, we may miss grains or scruples; but to snatch greedily at the little over-running dust of the balance, and to throw away the massive ingots that weigh the scales down, is the greatest folly in the world.

TAYLOR.

"A man," says Taylor, "may prudently and piously hold a conclusion which he cannot defend against a witty adversary; and this is no less the case, even though the wit be his own, and he himself his own adversary." To which may be added, that with so much consciousness of intellectual weakness, with so much experience of moral error, as almost every

man must confess and lament, there are but few, very few of us, who can ever dare to rely on the unsupported verdict of their own understandings. Who is there of us all, who cannot recur to some opinion which he has himself held with the most honest pertinacity, but which has now faded away from him as a mere vision of fancy, or as one of the illusions of his childish imagination? How many of us must have discovered that much which we have followed with avidity is but a baseless fabric after all, and that though "there are many ancient errors, there are but few new truths!"

PENROSE.

Our trust in the Almighty is that, with us, contentions are now at their highest float, and that the day will come (for what cause of despair is there?), when, the passions of former enmity being allayed, we shall, with ten times redoubled tokens of our unfeigned reconciled love, shew ourselves each towards the other, the same which Joseph and the brethren of Joseph were at the time of their interview in Egypt. Our comfortable expectation and most thirsty desire, whereof what man soever among you shall any way help to satisfy (as we truly hope there is no one among you but some way or other will), the blessings of the God of peace, both in this world and in the world to come, be upon him, more than the stars of the firmament in number.

HOOKE.

I would not be so presumptuous as to say positively that I am able to bear so great a trial; but, according to my sincere thoughts of myself, I could, through God's assistance, lay down my life upon condition that all those who dissent from the Church of England were united in her communion.

BISHOP BULL.

Good men, by remaining in the Church, might do a thousand times more good than they could be capable of doing by deserting it; and so long as the doctrine itself is preserved sound and pure by the continuance of holy men in the Church, who in that case can remain with a clear conscience, revivals may be expected from time to time. Hasty and intemperate schisms rend the Church into miserable fragments—prevent, as far as man can prevent, any great and general revival of godliness, and are strongly guarded against in the epistolary writings of the New Testament.

MILNER.

Think not, Dissenters, that I would turn you over to the “uncovenanted mercies” of God. I do not tell you that dissent will necessarily destroy your souls. Every man who builds upon the one foundation, Jesus Christ, will undoubtedly be saved, whether he be Churchman or Dissenter. It is upon other grounds that I call upon you to forsake dissent. I believe that Christian unity, though, possibly, not essential to salvation, is essential to edification; and the more our edification is increased, the more will our glory be increased also. Division will certainly tarnish your crowns, though it may not destroy your souls. Oh! brethren, be not content with saying, “If we get to heaven, that is enough.” This, surely, was not the language of St. Paul. Have a loftier aim. Press forward towards high and noble crowns. Cast aside that which so much hinders your own and the Church’s welfare. Let sects and parties vanish. Let every reason that would persuade you to remain in dissent yield to the strong appeal of God’s own word, which says, “Let there be no divisions among you.” If dissent be valued as a right eye—if you fancy it to be useful as a right hand—pluck it away, and cast

it for ever from you. If you be a dissenting minister, and expect to lose even the means of subsistence by giving it up, I yet dare not say any other word to you than this, that it is better to starve than to commit the least sin; but that God, who careth for the sparrows, will not forget you. You may be very greatly tried, but you cannot be forsaken.

TRACT ON "CHURCH UNITY."

HOLINESS.

Let us not delude ourselves; this is a truth, if there be any in religion—they that are not made saints in the estate of grace, shall never be saints in glory. The stones that are appointed for that glorious temple above, are hewn, and polished, and prepared for it here, as the stones were wrought and prepared in the mountains for building the temple of Jerusalem. This is God's order. He gives grace first, and glory afterwards. And they that think they are bound for heaven in the ways of sin, have either found a new way, untrodden by all that have gone thither, or will find themselves deceived in the end.

LEIGHTON.

EXTENT OF HOLINESS.

This, then, is to be done: affection to sin must be purged out. We must cleanse the ground; not only lop off the branches, but dig about, and loosen, and pluck up the root; though still fibres of it will stick, yet we ought to be still finding them out, and plucking them up. And not only the inner part of all sins, but those sins which are most or wholly inward, that hang not so much on the body, nor are acted by it, those filthinesses of the spirit, that are less discerned than those of the flesh; and, as more

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hardly discerned, so, when discerned, are more hardly purged out—pride, self-love, unbelief, curiosity, &c., which, though more retired and refined sins, yet are pollutions and defilements of the worst sort, as being more spiritual; these must be purged out. Fleshly pollutions are things of which the devils are not capable in themselves, though they excite men to them, and so they are called unclean spirits. But the highest rank of sins are those that are properly spiritual wickednesses. These, in men, are the chief strengths of Satan, the inner works of his forts and strongholds. Many that are not much tempted to the common gross sensualities have possibly (though an inclination to them) yet a kind of disdain; and, through education, and morality, and strength of reason, with somewhat of natural conscience, are carried above them, who yet have many of those heights, those lofty imaginations, that rise against God and the obedience of Christ, and which must be demolished.

LEIGHTON.

MEANS OF ATTAINING HOLINESS.

The grace of God in the heart of man is a tender plant, in a strange unkindly soil; and therefore cannot well prosper and grow without much care and pains, and that of a skilful hand, and that hath the art of cherishing it. For this end God hath given the constant ministry of the word to his Church, not only for the first work of conversion, but also for confirming and increasing of his grace in the hearts of his children. Our sanctification is to be managed by all holy means, word and sacrament more wisely and spiritually used than common with us; and private prayer, that purifies and elevates the soul, takes it up into the mount and makes it shine; and particularly

supplication for the spirit of holiness and victory over sin is not in vain; it obtains its desires of God, the soul becoming that which it is fixedly set upon: again, holy resolution, in which Christians are so much wanting; the consideration of divine truths, the mysteries of the kingdom, the hope of Christians—rich and great promises. These are all the means; holy means they are, as their end is the perfection of holiness.

LEIGHTON.

THE SACRAMENTS.

Instruction and prayer are duties which serve as elements, parts, or principles to the rest that follow, in which number the sacraments of the Church are chief. The Church is to us that very mother of our new birth, in whose bowels we are all bred, at whose breasts we receive nourishment. As many, therefore, as are apparently, to our judgment, born of God, they have the seed of their regeneration by the ministry of the Church, which useth to that end and purpose not only the word, but the sacraments, both having generative force and virtue.

The use of sacraments is but only in this life, yet so that here they concern a far better life than this, and are for that cause accompanied with “grace which worketh salvation.” Sacraments are the powerful instruments of God unto eternal life. For as our natural life consisteth in the union of the body with the soul, so our life supernatural in the union of the soul with God. Sundry the same effects and benefits which grow unto men by the one sacrament, may rightly be attributed unto the other. Baptism, however, doth challenge to itself but the inchoation (commencement) of those graces, the consummation whereof dependeth on mysteries ensuing. We re-

ceive Jesus Christ in baptism once as the first beginner; in the eucharist often, as being by continual degrees the finisher of our life. By baptism, therefore, we receive Christ Jesus, and from him that saving grace which is proper unto baptism. By the other sacrament we receive him also, imparting therein himself and that grace which the eucharist properly bestoweth. So that each sacrament having both that which is general or common, and that also which is peculiar to itself, we may hereby gather that the participation of Christ which properly belongeth to any one sacrament, is not to be obtained otherwise than by the sacrament whereunto it is proper. Seeing, then, that we admire and honour the holy sacraments, not respecting so much the service which we do unto God in receiving them, as the dignity of that sacred and secret gift which we thereby receive from God; seeing that sacraments consist altogether in some such gift or grace supernatural as only God can bestow, how should any but the Church administer those ceremonies as sacraments, which are not thought to be sacraments by any but by the Church?

HOOKER.

The blessed sacrament of the Lord's supper gives occasion, by way of preparation for it, to all conscientious receivers to examine the performance of their vows, since they received their last seal for the pardon of their sins past; and to examine and search their hearts, and make penitent reflections on their failings; and, that done, to bewail them, and then make new vows or resolutions to obey all God's commands, and beg his grace to perform them; and this done, the sacrament repairs the decays of grace, helps us to conquer infirmities, gives us grace to beg God's grace, and then gives us what we beg; makes

us still hunger and thirst after his righteousness, which we then receive; and, being assisted with our endeavours, will still so dwell in us, as to become our satisfaction in this life, and our comfort on our last sick-beds.

SANDERSON.

SELF-EXAMINATION.

By a daily examination of our actions, we shall the easier cure a great sin, and prevent its arrival to become habitual; for to examine we conceive to be a relative duty, and instrumental to something else. We examine ourselves, that we may find out our failings, and cure them; and therefore, if we use our remedy while the wound is fresh and bleeding, we shall find the cure more certain and less painful. For so a taper, when its crown of flame is newly blown off, retains a nature so akin to light, that it will with greediness re-ignite, and snatch a ray from the neighbour fire; so is the soul of man when it is newly fallen into sin: although God be angry with it, and the state of God's favour and its own graciousness is interrupted, yet the habit is not naturally changed; and still God leaves some roots of virtue standing, and the man is modest or apt to be made ashamed, and he is not grown a bold sinner; but if he sleeps on it, and returns again to the same sin, and by degrees grows in love with it, and gets the custom, and the strangeness of it taken away, then it is his master, and swells into a heap, and is abetted by use, and corroborated by newly entertained principles, and is insinuated into his nature, and hath possessed his affections, and tainted the will and understanding: and by this time a man is in the state of a decaying merchant, his accounts are so great and so intricate, and so much in arrear, that to examine it will be but to represent the particulars of his calamity: therefore

they think it better to pull the napkin before their eyes, than to stare upon the circumstances of their death.

TAYLOR.

REPENTANCE.

Repentance, of all things in the world, makes the greatest change; it changes things in heaven and earth; for it changes the whole man from sin to grace, from vicious habits to holy customs, from unchaste bodies to angelical souls, from swine to philosophers, from drunkenness to sober counsels; and God himself, "with whom is no variableness or shadow of turning," is pleased, by descending to our weak understandings, to say that he changes also upon our repentance, that he alters his decrees, revokes his sentence, cancels the bills of accusation, throws the records of shame and sorrow from the court of heaven, and lifts up the sinner from the grave to life, from his prison to a throne, from hell and the guilt of eternal torture, to heaven and a title to never-ceasing felicities. If we be bound on earth, we shall be bound in heaven; if we be absolved here, we shall be loosed there; if we repent, God will repent, and not send the evil upon us which we had deserved.

Repentance is restitution to the state of righteousness and holy living for which we covenanted in baptism. For we must know, that there is but one repentance in a man's whole life, if repentance be taken in the proper and strict evangelical-covenant sense, and not after the ordinary understanding of the word: that is, we are but once to change our whole estate of life from the power of the devil and his entire possession, from the state of sin and death, from the body of corruption to the life of grace, to the possession of Jesus, to the kingdom of the gospel; and this is done in baptism. After this change, if

ever we fall into the contrary state, and be *wholly* estranged from God and religion, and *profess* ourselves servants of unrighteousness, God hath made no more covenant of restitution to us, there is no place left for any more repentance or entire change of condition, or new birth; a man can be regenerate but once. But if we be overtaken by infirmity, or enter into the borders of this estate, and commit a grievous sin, or ten or twenty, so we be not in the entire possession of the devil, we are for the present in a damnable condition, if we die; but if we live, we are in a recoverable condition; for so we may repent often. Our hopes of pardon are just as is the repentance; which, if it be timely, hearty, industrious, and effective, God accepts; not by weighing grains or scruples, but by estimating the great proportions of our life. A hearty endeavour, and an effectual general change, shall get the pardon.

TAYLOR.

The covenant of baptism encompasses the publicans and the harlots, to whom we preach, let them have as little of baptismal purity as they may. We preach repentance to them on this, and on no other ground—that they have a Father, and that they may arise and go to him; that they have a Saviour, and that he will deliver them from all their enemies; that they have a Spirit given them, and that he is willing and able to cleanse them from all their sins, and to endow them with the blessings that they need, righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

ANON.

THE CHRISTIAN'S DEATH.

I have lived to see that this world is made up of perturbations; and I have been long preparing to leave it, and gathering comfort for the dreadful hour

of making my account with God, which I now apprehend to be near; and though I have, by his grace, loved him in my youth, and feared him in mine age, and laboured to have a conscience void of offence to him and to all men; yet if thou, O Lord, be extreme to mark what I have done amiss, who can abide it? And, therefore, where I have failed, Lord, shew mercy to me; for I plead not my righteousness, but the forgiveness of my unrighteousness, for His merits who died to purchase pardon for penitent sinners. And since I owe thee a death, Lord, let it not be terrible; and then take thine own time: I submit to it; let not mine, O Lord, but let thy will be done.

HOOKER'S LAST WORDS.

RELIGION.

By religion, I mean such a sense of divine truth as enters into a man, and becomes a spring of a new nature within him; reforming his thoughts and designs, purifying his heart, and sanctifying him and governing his whole deportment, his words as well as his actions; convincing him that it is not enough not to be scandalously vicious, or to be innocent in his conversation, but that he must be entirely, uniformly, and constantly pure and virtuous; animating him with a zeal to be still better and better, more eminently good and exemplary; using prayer, and all outward devotions, as solemn acts testifying what he is inwardly and at heart, and as methods instituted by God to be still advancing in the use of them further and further into a more refined and spiritual sense of divine matters. This is true religion, which is the perfection of human nature, and the joy and delight of every one that feels it active and strong within him. Of this I write with the more concern and emo-

tion, because I have felt this the true, and, indeed, the only joy which runs through a man's heart and life; it is that which has been for many years my greatest support; I rejoice daily in it; I feel from it the earnest of that supreme joy which I pant and long for; I am sure there is nothing else can afford any true or complete happiness. I have, considering my station, seen a great deal of all that is most shining and tempting in this world; the pleasures of sense I did at once nauseate; intrigues of state, and the conduct of affairs, have something in them that is more specious, and I was for some years deeply immersed in these, but still with hopes of reforming the world, and of making mankind wiser and better; but I have found "that which is crooked cannot be made straight." I acquainted myself with knowledge and learning, and that in great variety, and with more compass than depth; but though "wisdom excelleth folly, as much as light does darkness," yet, as it is a "sore travail," so it is so very defective, that what is wanting to complete it cannot be numbered. I have seen that "two were better than one," and that a "threefold cord is not easily loosed;" and have therefore cultivated friendship with much zeal and a disinterested tenderness; but I have found that this was also vanity and vexation of spirit, though it be of the best and noblest sort. So that, upon great and long experience, I could enlarge upon the preacher's text, "Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity;" but I must also conclude with him: "Fear God, and keep his commandments," for this is the *all* of man, the whole both of his duty and his happiness. I do, therefore, end all in the words of David, of the truth of which, upon great experience and a long observation, I am so fully assured, that I leave these, as my last words, to posterity: "Come, ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. What man is

he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil and do good ; seek peace and ensue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."

BURNET.





LAW.

OF Law there can no less be acknowledged, than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world; all things in heaven and earth do her homage—the very beast, as feeling her care, and the greatest, as not exempted from her power; both angels and men, and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy.

HOOVER.

DIFFERENCE OF RANKS.

The wisdom and goodness of God, that shines in the natural order and dependence of things on one another, in the frame of the great world, appears likewise, and commends itself to us, in the civil order he has instituted in the societies of men, the lesser world. As out of the same mass he made the heaven and the earth, and the other elements betwixt them, one higher than another, and gave them different stations and qualities, yet so different as to be linked and concatenated, "*concordia discordi*" (by an harmonious diversity), and all for the concern and benefit of the whole; thus, for the good of men hath the Lord assigned those different stations of rule and subjection, though all are of one race, raising from among men some above the rest, and clothed them with such authority as hath some representment of

himself, and accordingly communicating to them his own name, "I have said ye are gods." And the very *power* that is in magistracy to curb and punish those that despise it, St. Paul useth as a strong and hard cord to bind on the duty of obedience—a cord of necessity, saying, "Ye must needs be subject." But he adds another of a higher necessity, that binds more strongly and yet more sweetly, that of *conscience*: "Ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for *conscience*' sake." LEIGHTON.

A true natural aristocracy is not a separate interest in the state, or separable from it. It is an essential integrant part of any large body rightly constituted. It is formed out of a class of fair presumptions, which, taken as generalities, must be admitted for actual truths. To be bred in a place of estimation; to see nothing low and sordid from one's infancy; to be taught to respect one's self; to be habituated to the censorial inspection of the public eye; to look early to public opinion; to stand upon such elevated ground as to be enabled to take a large view of the wide-spread and infinitely diversified combinations of men and affairs in a large society; to have leisure to read, to reflect, to converse; to be enabled to draw the court and attention of the wise and learned, wherever they are to be found; to be habituated, in armies, to command and to obey; to be taught to despise danger in the pursuit of honour and duty; to be framed to the greatest degree of vigilance, foresight, and circumspection, in a state of things in which no fault is committed with impunity, and the slightest mistakes draw on the most ruinous consequences; to be led to a guarded and regulated conduct from a sense that you are considered as an instructor of your fellow-citizens in their highest concerns, and that you act as a reconciler between God

and man ; to be employed as an administrator of law and justice, and to be thereby among the first benefactors to mankind ; to be a professor of high science or liberal art ; to be amongst rich traders, who, from their success, are presumed to have sharp and vigorous understandings, and to possess the virtues of diligence, order, constancy, and regularity, and to have cultivated an habitual regard to commutative justice :—these are circumstances of men which form what I call a natural aristocracy, without which there is no nation ; and to give no more importance, in the social order, to such descriptions of men than that of so many units, is a horrible usurpation.

BURKE.

ORIGIN OF GOVERNMENT.

It appears from holy writ, that the providence of God was careful to give a beginning to the human race in that particular way which might for ever bar the existence of the whole, or of any large portion of mankind, in that state which has been called the state of nature (that is, free from the restraint of law). Mankind, from the beginning, never existed otherwise than in society and under government ; whence follows this important consequence, that to build the authority of princes, or of the chief magistrate, under whatever denomination, upon any compact or agreement between the individuals of a multitude living previously in the state of nature, is, in truth, to build a reality upon a fiction.

The plain truth is this : the manner in which, as we are informed upon the authority of God himself, God gave a beginning to the world, evidently leads to this conclusion, namely, that civil society, which always implies government, is the condition to which God originally destined man ; whence the obligation

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on the citizen to submit to government is an immediate result from that first principle of religious duty, which requires that man conform himself, as far as in him lies, to the will and purpose of his Maker. The governments which now are, have arisen, not from a previous state of no-government, falsely called the state of nature, but from that original government under which the first generations of men were brought into existence, variously changed and modified, in a long course of ages, under the wise direction of God's over-ruling providence, to suit the various climates of the world, and the infinitely varied manners and conditions of its inhabitants. And the principle of subjection is not that principle of common honesty which binds a man to his engagements, much less that principle of political honesty which binds the child to the ancestor's engagements; but a conscientious submission to the will of God. The Israelites were the only people upon earth whose form of government was of express divine institution, and their kings the only monarchs who ever reigned by an indefeasible divine title; but it is contended that all government is in such sort of divine institution, that, be the form of any particular government what it may, the submission of each individual is a principal branch of that religious duty which each man owes to God; it is contended, that the state of mankind was never such that it was free to any man, or to any number of men, to choose for themselves whether they would live subject to government and united to society, or altogether free and unconnected.

These views of the authority of civil governors, as they are obviously suggested by the Mosaic history of the first ages, so they are confirmed by the precepts of the gospel; in which, if any thing is to be found clear, peremptory, and unequivocal, it is the injunction of submission to the sovereign authority;

and, in monarchies, of loyalty to the person of the sovereign.

HORSLEY.

THE KINGLY FORM OF GOVERNMENT. .

Concerning the kingly form of government, it may be said that it bears the nearest resemblance to the divine sovereignty.

ANON.

LIBERTY. .

The most valuable part of liberty is nothing else but that we may not be compelled to do any thing that the law has left in our choice whether we will do or no ; nor hindered from doing any thing we have a mind to do, and which the law has given us liberty to do, if we have a mind to do it ; and compulsion and force in either of these cases is an act of violence and injustice against our right, and ought to be repelled by the sovereign power, and may be resisted by ourselves, so far as the law permits. The law is the standard and guardian of our liberty ; it circumscribes and defends it ; but to imagine liberty without a law, is to imagine every man with a sword in his hand, to destroy him that is weaker than himself.

CLARENDON.

Every man, when he enters into society, gives up a part of his natural liberty, as the price of so valuable a purchase ; and, in consideration of receiving the advantages of mutual commerce, obliges himself to conform to those laws which the community has thought proper to establish. And this species of legal obedience and conformity is infinitely more desirable than that wild and savage liberty which is sacrificed to obtain it.

BLACKSTONE.

CONSTITUTION OF ENGLAND.

The three species of government have, all of them, their several perfections and imperfections. Democracies are usually the best calculated to direct the end of a law; aristocracies to invent the means by which that end shall be obtained; and monarchies to carry those means into execution. And the ancients had, in general, no idea of any other permanent form of government but these three; for though Cicero declares himself of opinion, that the best form of government would be made up of the three sorts already mentioned, yet a later writer treats the notion of a mixed government, formed of them all, and partaking of the advantages of each, as a visionary whim, and one that, if effected, would never be lasting or secure. But, happily for us of this empire, the British constitution has long remained, and, I trust, will long continue, a standing exception to the truth of this observation: for as with us the executive power of the laws is lodged in a single person, they have all the advantages of strength and despatch that are to be found in the most absolute monarchy: and as the legislature of the kingdom is entrusted to three distinct powers, entirely independent of each other—first, the king; secondly, the lords spiritual and temporal, which is an aristocratical assembly of persons selected for their piety, their birth, their wisdom, their valour, or their property; and, thirdly, the house of commons, freely chosen by the people from among themselves, which makes it a kind of democracy—as this aggregate body, actuated by different springs, and attentive to different interests, composes the British parliament, and has the supreme disposal of everything, there can be no inconvenience attempted by either of the three branches, but will be withstood by the other two, each branch being

armed with a negative power, sufficient to repel any innovation which it shall think inexpedient or dangerous. Here, then, is lodged the sovereignty of the British constitution ; and lodged as beneficially as is possible for society ; for in no other shape could we be so certain of finding the three great qualities of government so well and so happily united. If the supreme power were lodged in any one of the three branches separately, we must be exposed to the inconveniences of either absolute monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy, and so want two of the three principal ingredients of good polity, either virtue, wisdom, or power. If it were lodged in any two of the branches—for instance, in the king and house of lords,—our laws might be providently made, and well executed, but might not always have the good of the people in view: if lodged in the king and commons, we should want that circumspection and mediatory caution which the wisdom of the peers is to afford: if the supreme right of legislature were lodged in the two houses only, and the king had no negative upon their proceedings, they might be tempted to encroach upon the royal prerogative, or, perhaps, to abolish the kingly office, and thereby weaken, if not totally destroy, the strength of the executive power. But the constitutional government of this empire is so admirably tempered and compounded, that nothing can endanger or hurt it, but destroying the balance of power between one branch of the legislature and the rest. For if ever it should happen that the independence of any one of the three should be lost, or that it should become subservient to the views of either of the other two, there would soon be an end of our constitution.

BLACKSTONE.

CHURCH AND STATE.

The people of England, persuaded that all things ought to be done with reference to the almighty Governor of the universe, think themselves bound, not only as individuals, in the sanctuary of the heart, or as congregated in that personal capacity, to renew the memory of their high origin and cast, but also in their corporate character to perform their *national* homage to the Institutor and Author and Protector of civil society, without which civil society man could not, by any possibility, arrive at the perfection of which his nature is capable, nor even make a remote and faint approach to it. They believe that he who gave our nature to be perfected by our virtue, willed also the necessary means of its perfection. He willed, therefore, the State; he willed its connexion, also, through the Church, with the prime source of all perfection, namely, religion. They who are convinced of this his will, which is the law of laws and the sovereign of sovereigns, cannot but think it right that this public acknowledgment should be testified by the establishment and endowment of religion. For these purposes they think some part of the wealth of the country is as usefully employed as it could be in fomenting the luxury of individuals. Our Church-establishment is the public ornament; it is the public consolation; it nourishes the public hope. The poorest man finds his own importance and dignity in it. It is for the man in humble life, to raise his nature, and to put him in mind of a state in which the privileges of opulence will cease, when he will be equal by nature, and may be more than equal by virtue, that this portion of the general wealth of the country is employed.

BURKE.

The British constitution has religion for its basis,

liberty for its end, and its principal means and safeguard of liberty is the majesty of the sovereign.

HORSLEY.

DISAFFECTION.

He that goeth about to persuade a multitude that they are not so well governed as they ought to be, shall never want attentive and favourable hearers; because they know the manifold defects whereunto every kind of regiment is subject, but the secret lets and difficulties, which in public proceedings are innumerable and inevitable, they have not, ordinarily, the judgment to consider; and because such as openly reprove supposed disorders of state are taken for principal friends to the common benefit of all, and for men that carry singular freedom of mind,—under this fair and plausible colour, whatsoever they utter passeth for good and current. That which wanteth in the weight of their speech, is supplied by the aptness of men's minds to accept and believe it. Whereas, on the other side, if we maintain things that are established, we have not only to strive with a number of heavy prejudices, deeply rooted in the hearts of men, who think that herein we serve the time, and speak in favour of the present state, because thereby we either hold or seek preferment; but also to bear such exceptions as minds so averted beforehand usually take against that which they are loath should be poured into them.

HOOKE.

The things which long experience of all ages hath confirmed and made profitable, let us not presume to condemn as follies and toys, because we sometimes know not the cause and reason of them.

HOOKE.

Men have often been warned against old prejudices : I would rather warn them against new conceits. The novelty of an opinion on any moral question is a presumption against it. Generally, it is only the half-thinker, who, in matters concerning the feelings and ancestral opinions of men, stumbles on new conclusions.

J. C. HARE.

One of the first and most leading principles on which the commonwealth and the laws are consecrated is, that the temporary possessors and life-renters in it, mindful of what they have received from their ancestors, and of what is due to their posterity, do not act as if they were entire masters ; that they do not think it among their rights to cut off the entail, or commit waste upon the inheritance by destroying at their pleasure the whole fabric of their society ; hazarding to leave to those who come after them a ruin instead of an habitation, and teaching these successors as little to respect their contrivances as they had themselves respected the institutions of their ancestors. By this unprincipled facility of changing the state as often as there are floating fancies and fashions, the whole chain and continuity of the commonwealth would be broken. No one generation would link with another. Men would become little better than the flies of summer.

BURKE.

THE BIBLE A UNIVERSAL GUIDE.

The Christian is possessed of a written rule of conduct, delivered from on high ; which is treated with profane contempt, if reference be not had to it upon *all questions of duty*, or if its maxims be tortured from their natural and obvious sense to cor-

respond with the precarious conclusions of any theory spun from the human brain. HORSLEY.

Certainly it is heaven upon earth to have man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth. BACON.

THE BEST STUDY.

Next to the study of the Scriptures, history best becometh a gentleman, Church-history a Christian, the British history an Englishman. FULLER.

Personal self-sufficiency and arrogance are the certain attendants upon all those who have not, by reading the works of the great minds of all ages, experienced a wisdom greater than their own.

BURKE.

AUGUSTINE.

And now we take our farewell of Augustine, of whom we give this character :—He found* here a plain religion (simplicity is the badge of antiquity) practised by the Britons, living some of them in contempt, and many more in ignorance of worldly vanities, in a barren country ;—and surely piety is more healthful in those places where it can least surfeit of earthly pleasures. He brought in a religion spun with a coarser thread, though guarded with a finer trimming, made luscious to the senses with pleasing ceremonies ; so that many who could not judge of the goodness were caught with the gaudiness thereof. However, we commend his pains, con-

* Christianity was first planted in this country during the lifetime of the apostles.

demn his pride, allow his life, approve his learning, admit the foundation of his doctrine, Jesus Christ, but refuse the "hay and stubble" he built thereon. We are indebted to God's goodness in moving Gregory, to Gregory's carefulness in sending Augustine, to Augustine's forwardness in preaching here : but, above all, let us bless God's exceeding great favour, that that doctrine which Augustine planted here, but impure, and his successors made worse with watering, is since, by the happy reformation, cleared and refined to the purity of the Scriptures. FULLER.

THE ENGLISH REFORMATION.

We cannot sufficiently admire the loving-kindness of almighty God, who allowed the seeds, indeed, of reformation to be sown among us by Wickliffe, yet then, notwithstanding the powerful human aid which he had, and his great popularity, caused them to lie as it were in the earth, until those which were less sound should, by length of time, decay ; and again, that he placed so many impediments in the way of our final reformation, (for what man does rapidly, he does rashly), and held back our steps by the arbitrariness of Henry ; and when we were again going down the stream of the times too readily, checked us at once by the unexpected death of Edward, and proved us by the fire of Mary's persecution, and took away by a martyr's death those in whom we most trusted ; and then finally employed a number of labourers in the restoration of his temple, of whom none should yet be so conspicuous that the edifice should seem to be his design, or that he should be tempted to restore the decayed parts according to any theory of his own, but rather that all things should be made "according to the pattern

which he had shewed" us in the Church primitive. Had our reform taken place at first, we had been Wickliffites ; under Edward we had been a branch of the Zuinglian or Calvinistic Church : now we bear no human name ; we look to no human founder ; we have no one reformer to set up as an idol ; we are neither of Paul nor of Apollos ; nor have we any human maxims or theories as the basis of our system ; but have been led back at once to the distant fountains, where the waters of life, fresh from their source, flowed most purely.

PUSEY.

THE CHURCH THE FRIEND OF LIBERTY.

It is worthy of remark, that in the two most critical periods of her history, England is indebted for liberty to the bishops of the Church. 1. The person who headed the barons in extorting Magna Charta from King John, was Stephen Langton, archbishop of Canterbury. 2. When James II. resolved to restore the popish religion by every means, whether lawful or unlawful, he received his first repulse in the passive resistance offered by the seven bishops to lending the pulpits of their clergy for the proclamation of the monarch's illegal ordinances. It is also remarkable, that as the Church of England in each case was the guardian of liberty, so it was from the Church of Rome that liberty was threatened. So true is it that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

EDITOR.

KING ALFRED.

Yea, consider him as a king in his court, as a general in his camp, as a Christian in his closet, as a

patron in the Church, as a founder in his college, as a father in his family,—his actions will every way appear no less excellent in themselves than exemplary to others.

FULLER.

THE UNIVERSITIES.

My prayers shall be, that each university may turn all envy into generous, yea gracious, yea glorious emulation: contending, by laudable means, which shall surpass the other in their serviceableness to God, the Church, and commonwealth; that so, “commencing” in piety, and “proceeding” in learning, they may agree against their two general adversaries—ignorance and profaneness. May it never be said of them, what Naomi said of herself, that she was too old to bear sons! (Ruth i. 12). May they never be superannuated into barrenness! but like the good trees in God’s garden, “they shall bring forth fruit in their old age, they shall be fat and flourishing.”

FULLER.

NOBILITY OF BIRTH.

As for nobility in particular persons, it is a reverend thing to see an ancient castle or building not in decay, or to see a fair timber-tree sound and perfect; how much more to behold an ancient noble family which has stood against the waves and weathers of time?

BACON.

THE ENGLISH COUNTRY GENTLEMAN.

A knowing and virtuous gentleman, who understands his religion and loves it; who practises the true rules of virtue, without affectation and

moroseness; who knows enough of law to keep his neighbours in order, and give them good advice; who keeps meetings for his county, and restrains vice and disorder at them; who lives hospitably, frugally, and charitably; who respects and encourages good clergymen, and worships God both in his family and at church; who educates his children well, who treats his servants gently, and deals equitably with his tenants and all others with whom he has any concerns; such a man (and some such instances there are among us) shines and is a public blessing to all that see him or come near him.

BURNET.

THE PARSON.

He is called parson (*persona*), because by his person, the Church, which is an invisible body, is represented; and he is in himself a body corporate, in order to protect and defend the rights of the Church, which he personates, by a perpetual succession. He is sometimes called the rector or governor of the Church, but the appellation of parson (however it may be depreciated by familiar, clownish, and indiscriminate use) is the most legal, most beneficial, and most honourable title a parish priest can enjoy; because such an one (Sir Edward Coke observes), and he alone, is said to *personate* or represent the Church.

BLACKSTONE.

THE GOOD PARISHIONER

Is at once near to the church, and not far from God; like unto Justus, "one that worshipped God, and his house joined hard to the synagogue." Otherwise, if his distance from the church be great,

his diligence is the greater to come thither in season. *He is timely at the beginning of common prayer.* Yet as Tully charged some dissolute people for being such sluggards that they never saw the sun rising or setting, as being always after the one and before the other ; so some negligent persons never hear prayers begun, or sermon ended, the confession being past before they come, and the blessing not come before they are passed away.

In the sermon he sets himself to hear God in the minister. Therefore he divesteth himself of all prejudice. He hearkens very attentively. It is a shame when the church itself is a cemetery, wherein the living sleep above ground, as the dead do beneath.

At every point that concerns himself, he turns down a leaf in his heart ; and rejoiceth that God's word has pierced him, as hoping that while his soul smarts, it heals.

He accuseth not his minister of spite for particularising him. It does not follow that the archer aimed because the arrow hit ; rather our parishioner reasoneth thus :—If my sin be notorious, how could the minister miss it ? If secret, how could he hit it without God's direction ? But foolish hearers make even the bells of Aaron's garments *to clink as they think*. And a guilty conscience is like a whirlpool, drawing in all to itself, which otherwise would pass by. One causelessly disaffected to his minister, complained that he in his last sermon had personally inveighed against him, and accused him thereof to a grave religious gentleman in the parish. "Truly," said the gentleman, "I had thought he meant me, for it touched my heart." This blunted the edge of the other's anger.

His tithes he pays willingly, with cheerfulness. How many part with God's portions grudgingly, or else pinch it in the paying ! The tenth amongst the

Romans was ever taken for what was best or biggest. It falls out otherwise in paying of tithes, where the least and leanest are shifted off to make that number.

He is bountiful in contributing to the repair of God's house. For though he be not of their opinion who would have the churches under the Gospel conformed to the magnificence of Solomon's temple, (whose porch would serve us for a church), and adorn them so gaudily that devotion is more distracted than raised, and men's souls rather dazzled than lightened; yet he conceives it fitting that such places should be handsomely and decently maintained; the rather because the climacterical year of many churches may seem to happen in our days; so old that their ruin is threatened, if not speedily repaired.

FULLER.

THE PEOPLE.

It is important to fix in our minds, with some degree of distinctness, an idea of what it is we mean when we say, "the people." In a state of *rude* nature there is no such thing as a people. A number of men in themselves have no corporate capacity. The idea of a people is the idea of a corporation: it is wholly artificial; the result of a common agreement. To enable men to act with the weight and character of a people, and to answer the ends for which they are incorporated into that capacity, we must suppose them to be in that state of habitual social discipline in which the wiser, the more expert, and the more opulent, conduct, and, by conducting, enlighten and protect the weaker, the less knowing, and the less provided with the goods of fortune. When the multitude are not under this discipline, they can scarcely be said to be in civil society. It is when multitudes

act together under such discipline, that I recognise "the people." In all things, the voice of this grand chorus of national harmony ought to have a mighty and decisive influence. But when you disturb this harmony; when you break up this beautiful order, this array of truth and nature, as well as of habit and prejudice; when you separate the common state of men from their proper chieftains, so as to form them into an adverse army, I no longer recognise that venerable object called "the people" in such a disbanded race of deserters.

BURKE.

THE MIDDLE CLASSES.

The body politic, like the animal body, is made up of several members, each of which has its peculiar functions to execute for the good of the whole. So that no class can say to the rest, I am the body political and have no need of you. Hence we see the mistake of calling by the common name a mere numerical majority. At the same time, however, that we must deny the title of "the people" to any one separate interest, we are quite willing to allow its due importance to the position occupied by the middle and lower classes of society. We would call them the heart of the state. As the heart is the centre of life to the animal frame, it is in the well-being of the middle classes that the health and vitality of a state consist. Now, in a healthy state of action, the beatings of the heart are scarcely perceptible; and so the sounder the condition of any state is, so much the more quiet and unobserved is the even tenour of this portion of the community. Again, the functions of the heart appear not to have any end peculiar to itself, but rather to be an essential pre-requisite for the welfare of the whole body. In the same way it

is, by insuring a fresh supply of recruiting strength to the more active and prominent members, that a healthy state of feeling among the middle classes is, in a national point of view, so important.

Great cause have we of this land to bless God's holy name on this score. The common people of England have ever been proverbial for deep religious principle and sound common sense. And to the presence of these excellent qualities are we indebted for the comparative quiet and regularity of our history. For example, in no country was the Reformation brought about with such little violence and excitement as in England; and although the following century was stained with the excesses of Cromwell's rebellion, even that we shall find, upon examination, to have been the work of a party more powerful by their activity than their numbers. The natural good sense of the people soon returned; and the old state of things was restored without shedding so much as a single drop of blood. Look again at the revolution of 1688. Never, probably, was so great a national change effected in so peaceable and orderly a manner. All this we conceive to be owing, under God, to the sound and healthy condition of the popular mind; and to the same quarter must we look for our security under the present mighty influx of wealth and luxury—causes which have wrought the ruin of all the states that have preceded us upon the page of history. EDITOR.

THE SABBATH.

I am always very well pleased with a country Sunday; and think if keeping holy the seventh day were only a human institution, it would be the best method that could be thought of for the polishing

and civilising of mankind. It is certain the country people would soon degenerate into a kind of savages and barbarians, were there not such frequent returns of a stated time in which the whole village meet together, with their best faces and in their cleanest habits, to hear their duties explained to them, and to join together in adoration of the supreme Being, and when opportunity is offered for innocent and friendly intercourse.

ADDISON.

ADVANTAGES OF RELIGION.

I will conclude this whole address to posterity with that which is the most important of all other things, and which alone will carry every thing else along with it ; which is to recommend, in the most solemn and serious manner, the study and practice of religion to all sorts of men, as that which is both "the light of the world" and "the salt of the earth." Nothing does so open our faculties, and compose and direct the whole man, as an inward sense of God ; of his authority over us ; of the laws he has set us ; of his eye ever upon us ; of his hearing our prayers, assisting our endeavours, watching our concerns ; and of his being to judge and to reward or punish us in another state, according to what we do in this. Nothing will give a man such a detestation of sin, and such a sense of the goodness of God, and of our obligations to holiness, as a right understanding and a firm belief of the Christian religion ; nothing can give a man so calm a peace within, and such a firm security against all fears and dangers without, as the belief of a kind and wise Providence, and of a future state. An integrity of heart gives a man a courage and a confidence that cannot be shaken : a man is sure that, by living according to the rules of religion, he becomes the wisest, the best, and happiest

creature that he is capable of being. Honest industry, the employing of his time well, and a constant sobriety, an undefiled purity and chastity, with a quiet serenity, are the best preservers of life and health ; so that, take a man as a single individual, religion is his guard, his perfection, his beauty, his glory ; it will make him a "light of the world," shining brightly, and enlightening many around him : or, take him as a piece of mankind, a citizen of the world, or of any particular state, religion is indeed then "the salt of the earth ;" for it makes every man to be to all the rest of the world whatever any one can with reason wish or desire him to be.

BURNET.

A CHRISTIAN'S LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT.

First, I commend my soul into the hands of almighty God, as of a faithful creator, which I humbly beseech him mercifully to accept ; looking upon it, not as it is in itself (infinitely polluted with sin), but as it is redeemed and purged with the precious blood of his only beloved Son, and my most sweet saviour, Jesus Christ, in confidence of whose merits and mediation alone it is that I cast myself upon the mercy of God for the pardon of my sins and the hope of eternal life. And here I do profess, that as I have lived, so I desire and (by the grace of God) resolve to die, in the communion of the Catholic Church of Christ, and a true son of the Church of England, which, as it stands by law established, to be, both in doctrine and worship, agreeable to the word of God, and in the most essential and most material points of both, conformable to the faith and practice of the godly Churches of Christ in the primitive and purer times, I do firmly believe ; led so

to do, not so much from the force of custom and education (to which the greatest part of mankind owe their particular different persuasions in point of religion), as upon the clear evidence of truth and reason, after a serious and impartial examination of the grounds, as well of popery as puritanism [dissent], according to that measure of understanding and those opportunities which God hath afforded me; and herein I am abundantly satisfied, that the schism which the papist on the one hand, and the superstition which the puritan on the other hand, lay to our charge, are very justly chargeable upon themselves respectively. Wherefore I humbly beseech almighty God, the Father of mercies, to preserve the Church by his power and providence, in peace, truth, and godliness, evermore to the world's end; which doubtless he will do, if the wickedness and security of a sinful people (and particularly those sins that are so rife, and seem daily to increase among us, of unthankfulness, riot, and sacrilege) do not tempt his patience to the contrary.

SANDERSON.





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